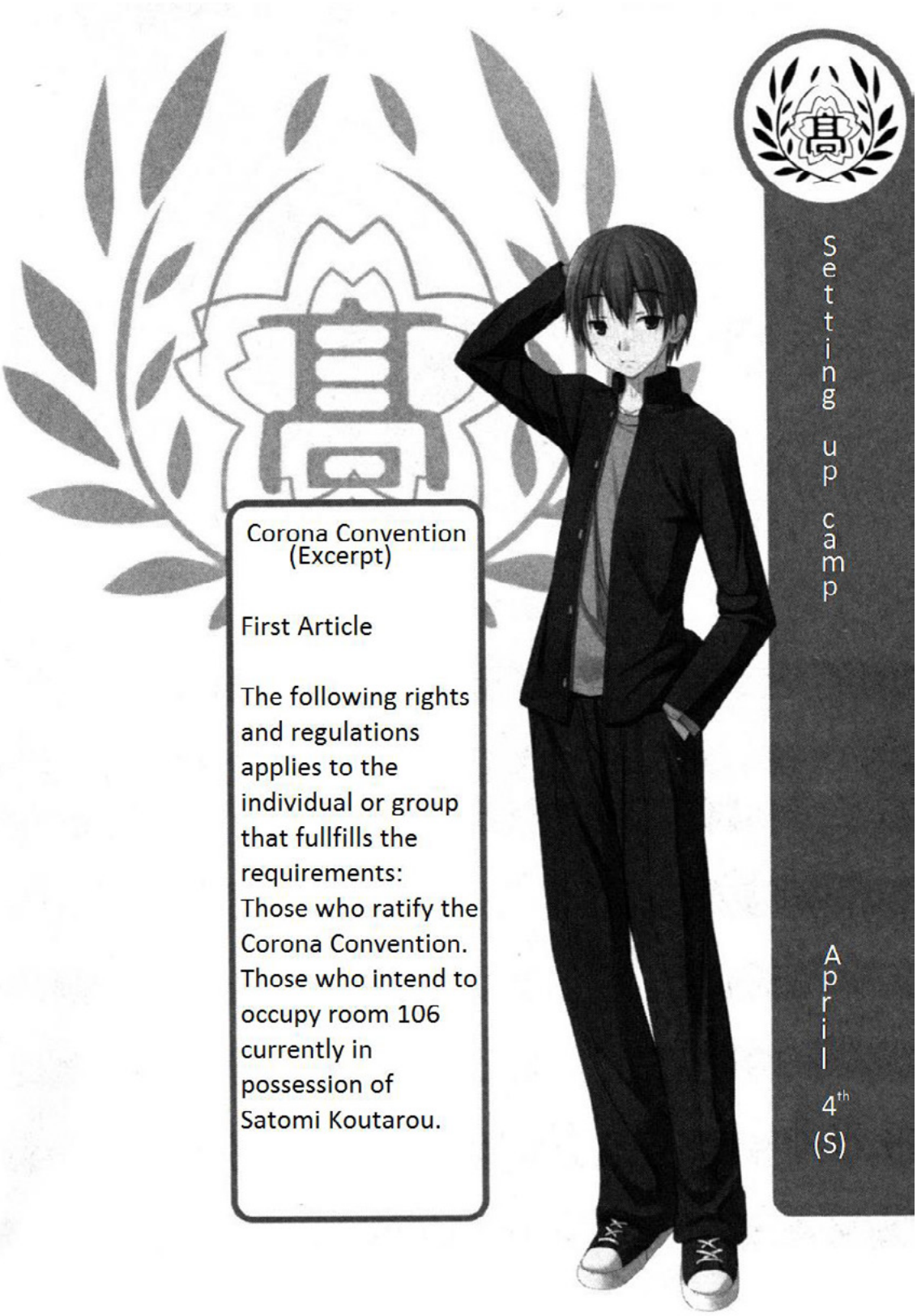
健速
Takehaya
文量閻の侵略者!?

Setting up Camp


Setting up camp
April 4th (S)
Corona Convention (Excerpt)
First Article
The following rights and regulations applies to the individual or group that fullfills the requirements:
Those who ratify the Corona Convention.
Those who intend to occupy room 106 currently in possession of Satomi Koutarou.

A paltry 5,000 yen.
That was the monthly rent for Room 106 of the Corona House, a two story wooden apartment building built 25 years ago.
It‘s true the rent was lower since its location was quite a distance from the center of town, but having a six tatami[1] room with a kitchen, bathroom and toilet for 5,000 yen a month made it an extraordinarily cheap apartment.
On top of that, it was completely interest free.
Apart from room 106, the rent was actually about 10 times higher.
However, there was a reason why room 106 in particular was super cheap.
Every person who had moved in had, without exception, left just as quickly.
The shortest stay was three hours and the longest three months. Leaving on the third day was the norm.
Because of that, the rent kept dropping.
Starting the year at 10,000 yen, the rent had been cut in half before spring.
“Don‘t treat that carelessly, Mackenzie. The contents of that box are more valuable than your life.”
So said the boy moving into this super cheap apartment.
“You‘re telling me that, Kou? Compared to you, I‘m always careful.”
“As long as you understand. Keep working, Mackenzie-kun.”
“Yeah, yeah… Who‘s helping who move, I wonder? Geez.”
The one moving in was Satomi Koutarou, 15 years old.
His childhood friend Matsudaira Kenji, also 15 years old, called him Kou, and in return Koutarou called him Mackenzie.
After the entrance ceremony the day after tomorrow they would both be high school students.

The date was Saturday, the 4th of April.
Due to his father’s sudden job transfer, Koutarou had begun to live alone that spring.
Koutarou had visited a real estate agency which introduced him to Corona House.
Koutarou, who had grown up alone with his single father, did not want to be a burden and jumped on the offer before even hearing the reason for the low rent.
“Anyways, Kou, it was a good thing you managed to find a vacant room with this kind of timing, huh?”
“I was lucky. When my old man told me about the transfer the other day I seriously panicked.”
Koutarou’s father’s transfer had been decided a little after the middle of February.
It had happened while Koutarou was waiting for the results of his high school entrance exam.
“That said, it couldn’t be helped that his co-worker was hurt and couldn’t go.”
“Mm, That’s right.”
Originally it hadn’t been Koutarou’s father who was supposed to go, but that co-worker instead.
However, the co-worker had had an accident that left him with a serious injury, and Koutarou’s father had to take his place.

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1 A type of mat used as flooring material, it‘s roughly 0.9m by 1.8m and about 5cm thick.

“The transfer was sudden, but it might be a good chance for my independence. Besides, we’re already high school students; we should be able to take care of ourselves.”
“How positive…”
“How about we celebrate the start of my journey to manhood?”
“What the heck is that supposed to be?”
Koutarou and Kenji carried a suitcase full of clothes into the building.
The two had been carrying luggage for a while now, going back and forth from the apartment to the moving van.
“Should I put the fridge next to the sink?”
A middle aged man in work clothes poked his face out of the apartment and asked. He was the driver of the moving van and had been helping Koutarou and Kenji move.
“Yes, please!”
“Got it.”
After hearing Koutarou’s answer, the man went back inside the room.
Koutarou and Kenji followed suit.
“To think this is 5,000 yen per month… It’s just too cheap.”
As the pair crossed the threshold Kenji sighed.
“Jealous, aren’t you?”
“If I had known of this place, I definitely would have rented it.”
The room was of a somewhat old Japanese style.
In the entrance there was a boarded floor hall leading into the inner six tatami mat room.
On the left side of the hall was a kitchen unit, and on the right were located the toilet and bathroom.
Though the room was old-fashioned, it was well-maintained and clean.
“Be careful, Kou, the suitcase is about to hit the wall.”
“I know, I know!”
“We’ll see… We’re coming through, uncle.”
“Oh, sorry about that Glasses-kun.”
Squeezing past the man installing the fridge in the kitchen, Koutarou and Kenji reached the six tatami mat room.
The two wove through the cardboard boxes and furniture littering the room.
“Alright, what do we do with this suitcase?”
“Hmm… Let’s put it in the wardrobe”
“Alright.”
Koutarou and Kenji worked together to heave the suitcase into the wardrobe.
As they stood up, the worker entered the room.
“That was the last of the luggage, wasn’t it?”
“Yes, this is all of it.”
“Alright, then I’ll be taking my leave.”
“Thank you very much!”

Koutarou, who was an athletic type, had been raised to respect his elders and naturally bowed to the man.
“The one bowing should be me; thank you very much.”
The man smiled gently and bowed his head deeply, then left the room, leaving behind several documents.

“Right then, that’s the first part done…”
“Here, Mackenzie.”
As Kenji was pushing up his glasses, Koutarou threw him a plastic bottle of tea.
“Whoa, thanks.”
Having been with Koutarou for a long while and therefore used to this, Kenji caught the plastic bottle without trouble.
“It’s a bit lukewarm since the fridge was just installed…”
As he said that Koutarou reached into a plastic bag and pulled out his own bottle of tea that he had purchased a while back from a nearby convenient store.
“I know!”
They opened their bottles and drank at the same time.
“Ah… I feel alive again!”
Koutarou sat down on one of the cardboard boxes while Kenji leaned against a wall next to the entrance of the room.
Kenji looked over at the calendar hanging up on the wall.
“Time sure flies fast… The day after tomorrow is the entrance ceremony!”
“That’s right, I need to unpack everything I need today.”
Koutarou also looked at the calendar he had hung up, along with a clock he had placed there the first day he had visited the room.
“Hmm? Can’t you just do it tomorrow?”
“I’ve got some part-time work to do tomorrow.”
“Why do that? Can’t you at least take a day off while you’re moving?”
Kenji stared at Koutarou in amazement.
“There’re a lot of necessities needed in the early spring. Don’t lump me together with you people who live with your parents!”
“Still, your old man left you some money, didn’t he?”
“I don’t want to touch that unless I have to. That’s what living is all about!”
“… I don’t care if it’s for living or whatever, but if you collapse don’t tell me I didn’t warn you…”
“Unlike you brainy people, I have absolute trust in my stamina.”
“Yes, yes, whatever you say…”
Kenji shrugged and sighed at Koutarou, who was puffing up his chest proudly.
“So what time do you start tomorrow, Kou?”
“In the morning, like always.”
“Alright, I’ll pick you up as usual.”

“Please do.”
The two of them actually worked at the same place.
When they had passed the high school entrance exam they had both applied for the same job.
As luck would have it, they were both hired and had already started working.
“…Hey Kou, will you be able to wake up in time when school starts?”
“No problem, no problem.”
“As someone who needs me to wake them up every weekend to go to work, you’re not very convincing…”
“Don’t be so stingy!”
Since work during the weekend usually started in the morning, Kenji waking Koutarou up was a common occurrence.
“I’ve started living on my own; I’ve joined the ranks of adults. I can’t act like a child forever.”
“Does that mean I don’t have to pick you up tomorrow?”
“This and that are two different things, Mackenzie-kun. You would do well to pick me up tomorrow.”
“As expected…”
Amazed, Kenji drooped his shoulders.
“Thanks as always, old man.”
“… All my motivation just vanished.”
“Don’t say that; you’re young after all!”
The doorbell at the front door rang.
“Hmm?”
“A guest?”
Just before Koutarou could answer, the door opened and the visitor stepped in.
“Hello! Is Satomi-san at home?”
The voice of a girl resounded through the building.
It was a voice Koutarou had heard before.
“Oh, it’s the landlord.”
“Landlord?”
“Ah… Yes, I’m coming!” Koutarou answered as he jumped up from the cardboard box he had been sitting on.
Kenji likewise stopped leaning against the entrance of the room.
“That’s a pretty cute sounding voice!”
“Come on, Mackenzie; you’ll be surprised.”
“Alright!”
The two of them headed for the door together.

“Hello, Landlord-san!”
“Hello, Satomi-san.”
Standing in front of the entrance was a girl wearing an apron over her normal clothes.
As she greeted them she bowed her head gracefully.

She was about the same age as Koutarou and Kenji, with a few traces of childhood left on her face.

Her long hair was tied back with a large ribbon, giving off an impression of a refreshing and healthy girl.

“Eh? Landlord? This girl?”

“That’s right! This person is the landlord of Corona House. Surprised, aren’t you, Mackenzie?”

“Ye-Yeah…”

Kenji looked on amazed and nodded.

The word landlord and the cute girl he was facing did not connect in Mackenzie’s head, leaving him astonished.

“I was surprised at first too.”

“Everyone is surprised at first. Fufufu…”

The girl smiled gently and turned towards Kenji.

“Nice to meet you. I’m Corona House’s landlord, Kasagi Shizuka.”

“Pl-Pleased to meet you. I’m Matsudaira Kenji.”

“Hope we’ll get along well, Matsudaira-san.”

“Yes, likewise!”

Kenji and Shizuka bowed to each other.

“Landlord-san, this guy is my childhood friend.”

“Oh, is that so?.”

“You’ll probably see him around here in the future, so please call him Mackenzie.”

Shizuka blinked a couple of times and looked at Kenji.

“You’re Japanese, aren’t you? With a name like Matsudaira…”

“Ah, yes, Of course he’s Japanese. His full name is Matsudaira Kenji, but if you shorten it you get Mackenzie.”

“I see, ‘Ma’ and ‘Kenji’ become Mackenzie.”

Satisfied, Shizuka put her hand to her mouth and started laughing.

“That’s just what Kou calls me!”

“So would you prefer it if I called you Matsudaira-san?”

“No, Mackenzie is fine; I’m already used to it, after all.”

“Got it, Mackenzie-san.”

Looking at Kenji shrugging his shoulders, Shizuka started laughing once again, her long hair and ribbon waving gently.

“That’s right; Landlord-san is starting at Kitsushouharukaze this year as well.”

“Heh, what a coincidence.”

“With a bit of luck, we could end up in the same class!”
“Fufu, let’s get along at school as well.”
Shizuka bowed politely once again.
“So Landlord-san, what business do you have with me?”
“Oh, right, I almost forgot!”
Shizuka clapped her hands and pointed at the window behind Koutarou and Kenji.
“Actually, a little while ago I saw the moving van leaving from my window, and I figured it was time to help.”
“From your window?”
“Yes Mackenzie-san, I happen to live in the room above.”
“Isn’t it great, I’m sharing a roof with the cute Landlord-san?”
“Well…”
Shizuka looked on with a smile.
“You’re flattering me, Satomi-san.”
“…Of course you’re sharing the same roof; this is an apartment, after all.”
“It’s a matter of feelings!”
“Fufufu, the two of you sure get along well… Oh, that’s right, I came to help. Unlike with the physical labor from before I should be able to help from now on.”
“That would help a lot, Landlord-san. Kou is good at breaking stuff and leaving a mess, but bad at cleaning up.”
“Hey, Mackenzie! Don’t say disrespectful things!”
“It’s the truth though. You constantly trouble me.”
Kenji let out a big sigh while adjusting his glasses.
“Then Mackenzie-san is always…?”
“Yes, I’m always having a hard time.”
“I am grateful.”
“… Only grateful though. Oh yes, Landlord-san, I have something I’d like to ask, if that’s alright.”
“Yes, what is it?”
Shizuka smiled and nodded.
“Why is the rent for this room only 5,000 yen?”
“O-oi Mackenzie! Don’t just suddenly ask about that!”
Koutarou, who was aware of the circumstances, began panicking.

“That’s because I want to know. With this great of a room and a reliable landlord, I can’t find anything wrong with it.”
“But you know, this apartment was left behind by Landlord-san’s parents, and-”
“I don’t mind, Satomi-san.”
Koutarou was worried about angering Shizuka, but she smiled calmly and shook her head.
“Mackenzie-san’s worries are justifiable. Fufufu, besides, haven’t you noticed that Mackenzie-san is worried about you Satomi-san?”

“Landlord-san…”
“Besides, there’s not much I can do in this matter.”
“Ha, haah….”
Koutarou nodded with an apologetic look on his face and Shizuka turned back to Kenji.
“Actually… In this room… They appear.”
“Appear? What appears?”
“The rumor is that a ghost appears in this room.”
“A gh-ghost!?”
A surprised Kenji started hastily looking around the room.
“I haven’t seen it myself yet, but every tenant here does… And they don’t stay for long.”
“A ghost… That’s hard to believe, though…”
“I think so too… But that’s what every tenant has said when they moved, so it’s the truth.”
Kenji was perplexed and smiled bitterly at Shizuka as he dropped his shoulders. Koutarou, on the other hand, puffed out his chest and grinned.
“Leave it to me Landlord-san! I won’t be beaten by a ghost!”
“That’s so reliable. Please live here long enough to erase any rumors of ghosts.”
“Of course!”
“But to think there’s a ghost in this room…”
A still unconvinced Kenji took another look around the room.
“Nothing will come from thinking on it too hard, Mackenzie. The landlord has come over, so let’s start unpacking.”
“Ah, you’re right.”
Urged by Koutarou, Kenji returned to normal.
“Kou is thick headed, so he’ll probably be fine even if a ghost appears.”
“Those words hurt…”
“That’s on purpose!”
“I know… Well then, shall we get started, Landlord-san?”
“Of course, Satomi-san. It looks like I won’t have to do much, though; the two of you make a great team.”
Looking at Koutarou and Kenji going back and forth, Shizuka started laughing.
“Is that so?”
“Landlord-san, please don’t say such a terrifying thing…”
“Mackenzie, you don’t have to put it like that, do you?”
As Koutarou and the rest were buzzing about, they unpacked the luggage.
Thanks to the cooperation of Kenji and Shizuka, enough luggage had been unpacked to settle in before dinner time.
“I’ll be going home now. You have work tomorrow, so keep the unpacking to a minimum and get to bed, okay?”
“I know, I know… Oversleeping would be bad, right?”
“Your ‘I know’ is the least trustworthy thing I know of, though…”

Kenji sighed once more as he put on his shoes, which were scattered about at the entrance.
“Then I’ll also be going now, Satomi-san.”
“Landlord-san, you don’t have to call me Satomi-san, we’ll be classmates the day after tomorrow.”
“Hmm, okay… Satomi-kun.”
“Yes, that way’s better.”
”Okay, then I’ll call you that.”
Shizuka smiled brightly and put on her shoes, which had been left neatly arranged. At the same time, Kenji opened the front door.
“Thanks a lot for today, Landlord-san.”
Hearing Koutarou’s thanks, the both of them exited through the door.
“No need, I was glad to help.”
“… No thanks for me, huh?”
“You’re more of a give and take kind of guy.”
“I don’t think so though…”
“Well then, Satomi-kun, goodbye.”
“Goodbye, Landlord-san.”
“Hurry up and get to sleep.”
“I get it, I get it!”
With a bang of the door Kenji and Shizuka vanished.

The lone Koutarou started unpacking once more after eating the bento[1] he had also bought at the convenience store.
“Hmm… Now what to do with this bat… I can’t just treat this like any old bat, after all… And I can’t just leave it in the umbrella stand either…”
Koutarou was holding the bat in his hand, thinking of a place to put it. The bat was signed and had been used by the so called God of Batting, the legendary Slugger.
It was one of the treasures Koutarou valued the most.
“Alright, I’ll get a stand to decorate it, but for today it’ll have to make do in the corner.”
Koutarou put down the bat and opened up a new cardboard box.
“Now, what was this again?…”
He ripped off the tape and peeked inside.
“More treasure, huh…”
Contained within the box were trophies, certificates, commemorative shields, and his beloved glove. These were all keepsakes from Koutarou’s middle school era.
“Oh? What’s this doing in here?”
Among the trove of keepsakes was one item that didn’t fit in with the rest.
“I’ll need to find a good place to put this…”
It was a knitted sweater. Koutarou picked up some nearby paper, neatly wrapped it up, and put it in the back of the wardrobe with his suitcase.

1 A pre-packed meal often eaten during school lunch and work lunch breaks.

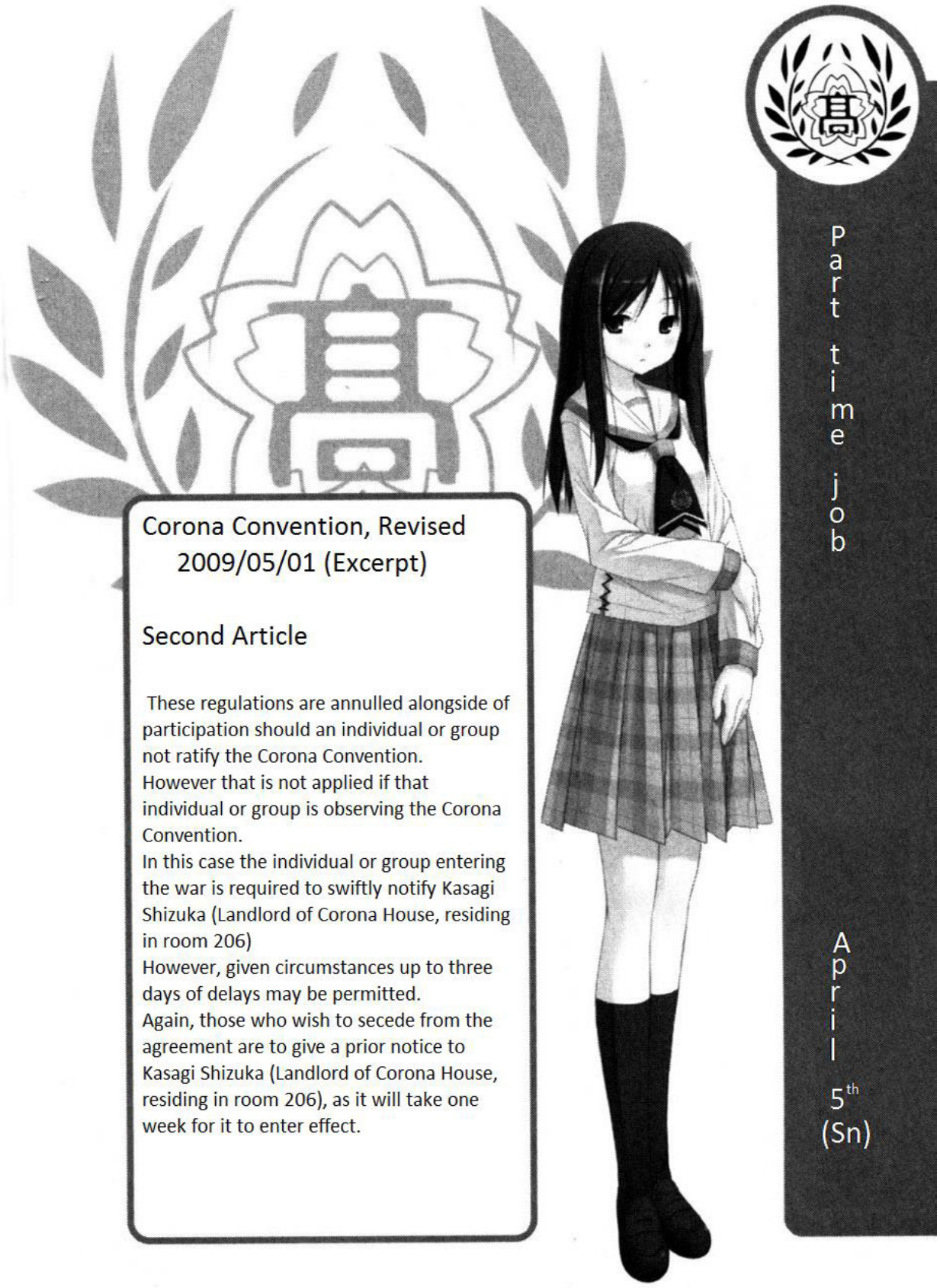
“And that’s that.”
Koutarou clapped his hands as he stepped away from the wardrobe.
Suddenly, the cellphone he had left charging in a corner of the room started ringing.
“Hm? Is that the old man?”
There was only one person with that ringtone among Koutarou’s contacts.
Satomi Yuichirou.
The name that appeared on the cellphone’s screen was Koutarou’s father’s.
Koutarou picked up the phone and placed it next to his ear.
“Hello, old man?”
“Oh, there you are Koutarou.”
The voice on the phone was indeed Koutarou’s father, Yuichirou.
“How’s it going over there? Have you unpacked all your luggage?”
“Slowly but surely. Mackenzie and the landlord helped me out, so it’s at least habitable.”
“I see. Did you thank both of them properly?”
“Of course. How’s it going on your end?”
“I’m living in the dormitory, so even if I don’t do anything dinner will be served and the bath will be prepared. If they washed my clothes as well, there would be nothing to complain about.”
“Good. You’re worse than I am at living on your own, so I was a bit worried, old man.”
“Hahaha, that’s true…”
The Satomi family consisted of just Koutarou and Yuichirou, and Koutarou had been doing almost all of the housework on his own.
Of course, he wasn’t necessarily good at it.
Even so, if Koutarou hadn’t done it, Yuichirou would have just made a bigger mess.
Yuichirou was a man who was terrible with housework.
“Living separately will be a good chance for you to find a good partner.”
Koutarou wanted his father to remarry as quickly as possible.
He was worried his father would die from hunger or that his room would fill up with dirt if he didn’t.
“Guhahaha, that’s a bit…”
However that was not likely to happen any time soon.
The reason being was that Yuichirou was still in love with his late wife.
Koutarou understood this and did not voice any complaints.
“Hmm, well, it seems all is going well.”
“You too, old man. Don’t forget to take out the trash.”
“I know, I know.”
“We’ll see about that.”
Koutarou felt like he was able to understand how Kenji must feel around him.
“Well, I won’t hold you up anymore. Besides, I still have some more unpacking to do.”
“I’ll do the same. Talk to you later, old man.”
“Yeah; good night, Koutarou.”
“Good night.”

Koutarou casually hung up the phone.
“I was wondering what would happen when he suddenly brought up the job transfer, but…”
Koutarou plugged the charger back into the phone.
“Everything is going well for now.”
He smiled, and after he’d taken a quick breather he began to put his room in order.
“Already eleven o’clock?”
Koutarou stopped as he noticed the clock approaching 11 P.M.
“I guess I’ll stop for today and go to bed. If I oversleep, I’ll never hear the end of it from Mackenzie…”
Koutarou had been busy moving these past several days, and on top of that, he had work in the morning.
Due to this, he decided it would be best to go to bed early.
“Alright, time to sleep.”
Koutarou slid open the wardrobe and pulled out a futon with a floral cover that Shizuka had prepared for him.
With a grunt, he pushed aside a cardboard box and threw down the futon.
At that point he looked down at the futon.
“I guess I should spread it out properly…”
Having changed his mind, Koutarou properly spread out the flower-print futon.
He would feel bad for his considerate landlord if he just carelessly threw it about.
“There we go.”
Having finished spreading out the futon, Koutarou turned off the light and crawled inside.
“Good night!”
Addressing no one in particular, Koutarou closed his eyes. He quickly fell asleep and began breathing calmly and evenly.
”Zzzzz…”
The only thing that could be heard in Room 106 was the sound of Koutarou’s breathing, which was about as loud as a ticking clock.
This sound would be drowned out by the TV in Room 105 or by Shizuka opening and closing the door in Room 206 above him.
But that only lasted until midnight. After 2 A.M., Koutarou’s relaxed breathing could once again be heard.
And then, another small sound could be heard in Room 106.
It was not Koutarou, who was in a deep sleep and not moving a muscle.

The noise was coming from the window. But it was not because the window was poorly constructed or because wind was blowing.
Despite that, the window kept rattling, with the sound growing continuously louder. After a few minutes the sound had become irritating.
”Zzzzz…”
But despite the sound, Koutarou showed no signs of waking up.

“Mmm… Mackenzie, just stop already…”
In fact, he began talking loudly in his sleep.
If such a loud voice wasn’t waking him up, neither would the window.
As if responding to Koutarou’s voice, the sound from the window stopped.
“Guehefuefuefue.”
However, right as Koutarou began talking in his sleep again, the window rang out, almost as if startled.
After that, there was silence for a while. Koutarou had stopped sleep talking, and a few minutes passed. Even so, the incidents did not stop.
A high-pitched sound resounded, as if a small glass bottle had fallen and broken.
However, the source of the sound could not be found inside the room.
The noise continued, and at the same time a baseball rolled across the tatami mat.
But the source of the sound could still not be found.
The noises continued, and they were increasing in volume, several times louder than the window from before.
“Hehehe, Mackenzie, you can’t handle Landlord-san? She is cute after all~”
Despite the commotion, Koutarou showed no signs of waking up; in fact, he began talking in his sleep once more.
“You’ve got good looks but no guts!”
As if to drown out Koutarou’s sleep talk, the mysterious noises grew even louder, and various things in the room started shaking.
As the room was at the height of chaos, furniture and boxes started rattling, with the sound growing even louder.
Even with loud noises right in front of him, Koutarou would not wake up.
Even his childhood friend Kenji had a hard time waking him up; these kinds of noises were nothing to Koutarou.
“Uehehehehe…”
The noise was interrupted by Koutarou’s sleep talk once more.
And if this noise was caused by someone…
“Stop with the rattling, Mackenzie!”
…That someone must have been amazed at Koutarou’s thickheadedness.

Part-time Job



Corona Convention, Revised
2009/05/01 (Excerpt)

Second Article

These regulations are annulled alongside of participation should an individual or group not ratify the Corona Convention.
However that is not applied if that individual or group is observing the Corona Convention.
In this case the individual or group entering the war is required to swiftly notify Kasagi Shizuka (Landlord of Corona House, residing in room 206)
However, given circumstances up to three days of delays may be permitted.
Again, those who wish to secede from the agreement are to give a prior notice to Kasagi Shizuka (Landlord of Corona House, residing in room 206), as it will take one week for it to enter effect.

“Haaa~~h...”
“Color me surprised, Kou. For you to wake up on your own...”
“I went to bed early, after all.”
Koutarou and Kenji, who were dressed for work, walked side by side.
Since it was a Saturday morning, only the two of them could be seen on the sidewalk.
“Like I said before, I’m already a self-sufficient adult living on my own, Mackenzie-kun.”
“And I hope it stays that way...”
“Of course it will!”
“We’ll see about that... By the way, what about that thing?”
“What thing?”
Kenji put on a serious face and lowered his voice.
“You know, about them appearing in that room...”
“Appearing? Oh yeah... You’re talking about the ghost!”
Understanding the reason for Kenji’s worries, Koutarou clapped his hands and smiled.
“The ghost didn’t appear at all!”
“It didn’t?”
“Yeah, nothing happened up until I fell asleep and it was quiet all throughout the night. Besides, thinking about it, if a ghost had appeared do you think I would have been able to wake up on my own?”
“You have a point there. If you hadn’t slept properly there’s no way you’d wake up on your own.”
Feeling relieved, Kenji loosened up.
“Fuhahaha, Mackenzie; I didn’t think you’d be one to believe in ghosts.”
“What?”
“For you to worry about ghosts when you’re always talking about science...”
Koutarou was poking fun at Kenji.
Kenji puffed up his cheeks and said.
“So what? Can’t a citizen of the science world hate ghosts?”
“If you’re scared, just say so!”
“Yes, scary, so scary. Whether ghosts exist or not, freaky things happen every day”
“You’re taking all this too seriously.”
As Koutarou shrugged, they approached the gates of a school.
Kitsushouharukaze: that was the name of the school the pair would be attending from the next day on.

Kitsushouharukaze was about a 20 minute walk from the closest station as well a 20 minute walk from Corona House.
Corona House, Kitsushou High School and the station formed an equilateral triangle, with all urban necessities gathered within it.
Kitsushouharukaze had been established a few years ago after the merging of the neighboring municipalities, Kitsushou and Harukaze.
After the merge, a high school would be needed for children of both municipalities to attend.

Plans to construct a school had already been in place before the merge, and Kitsushouharukaze naturally became a large scale high school.
It was not as big as a school in the city, but for a suburban school it was as large as could be.
“Fight, fight, fight! Harukaze Fight!”
Due to this fact, there were many students participating in club activities, even during spring break.
“The baseball club… The spring tournament must have ended, and the third years have graduated by now.”
“They seem quite lively; more so when the first years join, I imagine.”
Looking at the uniformed students, the two passed by the front gate. Their work site was slightly further ahead.
“…”
Passing by the front gate, Koutarou kept his eyes fixed on the schoolyard.
Pitching, batting, running and catching… Koutarou had been doing the same a while back.
“Hey, Kou… Are you sure you don’t want to join the baseball club?” Kenji asked Koutarou in a serious tone.
“It’s alright. Living on my own, working part-time, and playing baseball at the same time is just not possible.”
Koutarou took his eyes off the schoolyard, looked at Kenji and gave him a smile.
“Kou…”
Koutarou put on a lonely smile.
“Besides, there’s the Knitting Society, so there’s no reason to be so pessimistic.”
“What’s with that? The Knitting Society?”
“Hmm?”
“Are you serious about joining that club?”
“Of course I’m serious!”
Koutarou had decided to join the Knitting Society when he had been recruited during the announcement of the entrance exam results.
“You’re kidding, right? It just doesn’t fit you.”
Kenji stared at Koutarou’s body as he said that.
Big body, sturdy physique, and large hands.
Kenji did not think that knitting and handicrafts were in any way suitable for Koutarou.
If anything he would be better at tearing it up.
“Just you wait and see. I’ll be sure to knit a muffler for you sooner or later.”
“Please stop, you’re making me feel ill… I’m shuddering just imagining it.”
“You’re right, I feel the same way. I’ll just knit one for myself.”
The two smiled wryly and looked at each other.
“Admit it, your goal is the beautiful club president who recruited you.”
“It has nothing to do with that.”
“Oh? I didn’t expect that response… I was certain you were after the club president… Was I wrong?”
Being a childhood friend, Kenji saw through Koutarou’s reaction.

“Either way, I’ll be spending my youth with Sakuraba-senpai in the Knitting Society”
“Hmm, that does sound fun… Maybe I should join too…”
“Leave it be. If a lady-killer like you gets close to Sakuraba-senpai she’ll be tainted.”
“What’s that supposed to mean? Don’t treat me like I’m some sort of bacteria!”
“Just think about back during Valentine’s when you monopolized all of the class’ chocolate[1]. The other boys cried tears of blood.”
“That wasn’t my fault!”
Kenji sighed as he heard the same argument yet again.
“Not at all; it was entirely your fault. Don’t think a grudge over food will be forgiven easily!”
“But in the end you ate most of it anyway! Besides, that really wasn’t my fault. It’s easy to give chocolate to me, but indirectly it was given to y-”
Kenji stopped mid-sentence.
“Hmm? What’s wrong?”
“No, it’s nothing. In fact, I won’t tell you.”
“What’s that supposed to mean?”
“We’ll be late if we don’t hurry.”
“Wait up, what’s with the sudden rush!?”
The two arrived at the work site shortly after.

“HAAA!”
In time with Koutarou’s shout, a large stone began rolling.
“Koutarou-chan sure is strong.”
The elderly woman struck up a conversation with Koutarou.
The woman was wearing farmers’ clothes, and in her small hands she was holding a metal trowel.
“I’m still young, Obaa-chan. But as a result, I’m not good at careful work, like you.
“Hohoho, that might be true. Thanks for the help, Koutarou-chan.”
“You’re always giving me sweets, so consider it even.”
“What’d you call it again? Give and take?
“Haha, that’s right… Anyways, I’m returning to my post. I’ll see you later Obaa-chan.”
“Thanks again!”
Koutarou parted ways with the elderly lady and headed over to his assigned land division a few dozen meters away.
“Now then…”
As Koutarou looked back at the elderly lady, he saw her squatting down and shaving off soil by her feet with her trowel.
“Fufufu… I guess I’ll start up with my work again, then. I can’t afford to lose to Obaa-chan!”
Koutarou rolled up the sleeves of his work clothes, picked up a trowel and started shaving off soil by his feet.

1 Girls tend to give chocolate to the guy they like during Valentine‘s in Japan. There‘s also obligation chocolate, given to friends and family. A month later on 14th of March, which is called White Day, boys tend to return the gift, usually in the form of cookies.

Koutarou worked on excavating ruins; the elderly lady from before was a co-worker.
She had helped Koutarou out a lot back when he first started.
Kenji was doing the same job Koutarou was. However, he had been assigned to a different land division, and since the excavation site was very large, he was out of Koutarou's sight.
The ruins Koutarou's group was digging up were generally called the Kitsushouharukaze Ruins.
The ruins had been discovered by chance when plans for expanding on the Kitsushouharukaze High School facilities were in the making.
As one could guess from the circumstances of the discovery, the ruins were close to Kitsushouharukaze High School.
The school was within a few minutes walking distance and stood halfway up a slope. The ruins were at the top of said slope.
Therefore, continuing the climb up the slope past the school would lead to the excavation site.

At the time the ruins were discovered, they were thought to be from the late Yayoi Period[1], and nothing of value was expected to be discovered.
True to this belief, the only items found at the beginning of the excavation had been common relics.
However, after examining the items, the ruins were determined to be priceless; they were actually 10,000 years old!
Even if the items found were common, they held astronomical value if they were 10,000 years old.
10,000 years ago was the early Jōmon Period[2].
Earthenware and bronzeware of types commonly used during the Yayoi Period being over 10,000 years old was enough for a large scale investment.
The discovery could completely overturn the archaeological field.
To speed up the excavation, a large amount of workers were required, and recruitment posters were printed en masse.
Koutarou and Kenji, who had been looking for part-time jobs, jumped on the offer, and since it was so close to school it was an obvious pick.

Squatting and slowly shaving away at the soil little by little was very tiring.
However, Koutarou, who had been a catcher during the entirety of middle school, was used to the position.
Though he was unaccustomed at first, after over a month of work he was completely used to it.
"All I find is dirt, no matter how much I dig…"
According to the archaeologists, the area Koutarou was in charge of contained a building used during religious ceremonies. However, despite the efforts of several tens of workers, nothing like it had been found.
"Aren't we the only ones digging up someplace completely unrelated?…"
Since he started working, Koutarou had seen nothing but dirt.

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1 The Japanese iron age normally cited to last between 300 BC to AD 300.

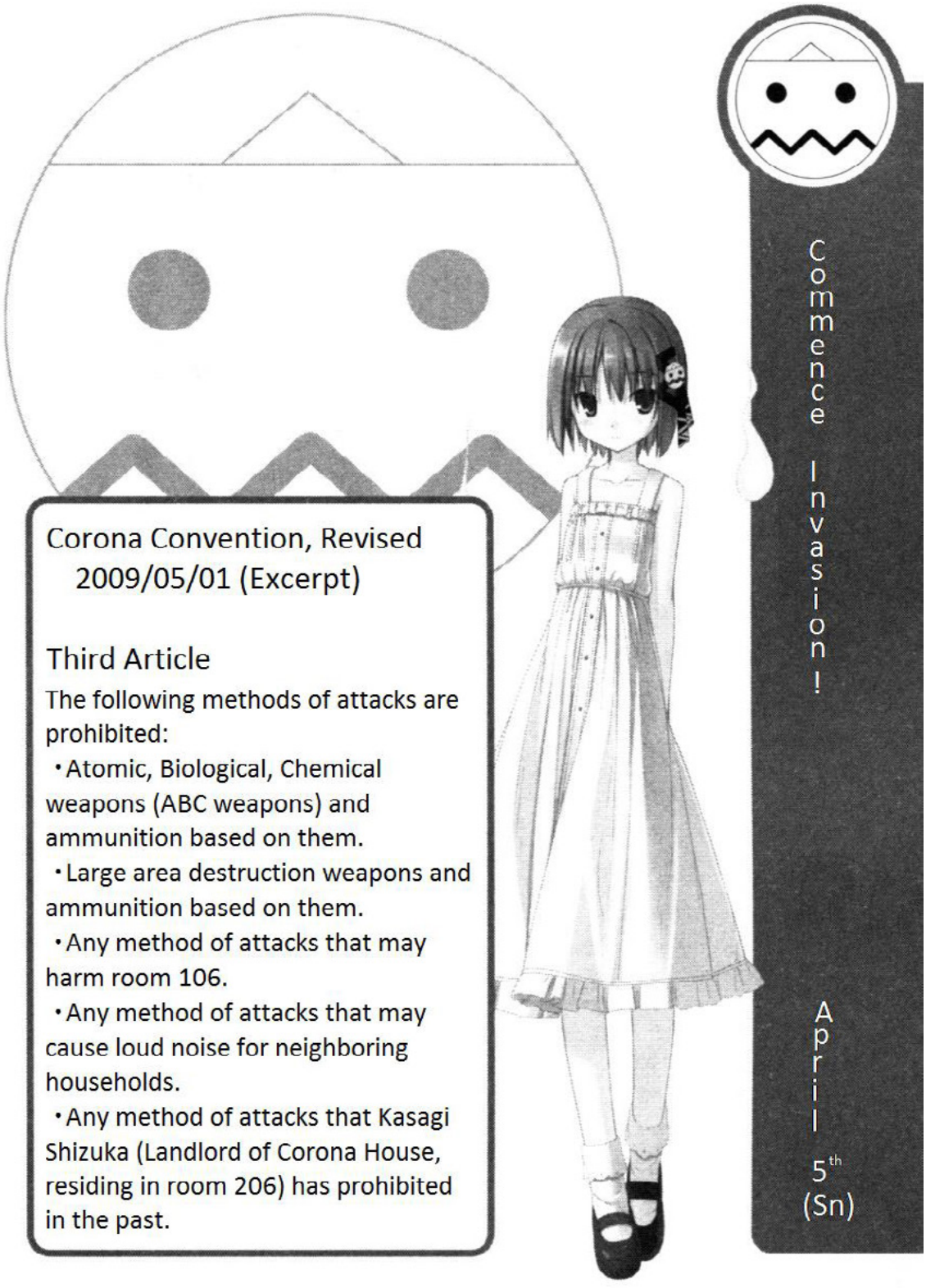
2 Prehistoric Japan, starting from roughly 12,000 BC to 300 BC.

“Mackenzie’s area seems so much more fun; he gets to discover a bunch of items…”
The tedious and unchanging work bored Koutarou.
“Koutarou…”
“Hmm?”
At that point, Koutarou thought he heard somebody’s voice
“I thought I just heard a voice… I wonder if it was Obaa-chan.”
Koutarou stood up and started looking for the source of the voice, but he couldn’t find anyone who could have called him.
Koutarou was the only person in this area, and the elderly woman had her back turned towards him.
“I wonder if I was just imagining it…”
Koutarou tilted his head in confusion, and the voice entered Koutarou’s ears once again.
“Koutarou…”
“This isn’t Obaa-chan’s voice… I feel like I know it very well… No, maybe it’s the first time I’ve heard it?”
“This way…”
“That way? On the other side?…”
After hearing the voice for the third time, Koutarou was able to determine its origins. It was coming from a wooded area about 10 meters away from him.
“All right…”
Koutarou left the trowel at his feet and approached the wooded area.
“Is this one of Mackenzie’s pranks, or is it someone else?”
Koutarou was almost certain it was one of Mackenzie’s pranks, so he didn’t feel any danger whatsoever.
However, in the event that it wasn’t, it might’ve been someone in trouble, so he decided to take a look just to be on the safe side.
“Really… We’ll be high school students tomorrow, and he’s wasting his time playing pranks… When I catch him I’ll make him confess whose voice he’s recorded!”
Having no recollection of the voice, Koutarou assumed Kenji had recorded the voice of some girl he’d hooked up with.
“Hmm, it’s pretty thick…”
Koutarou elbowed his way through the thick vegetation, rustling the bushes.
Because of the tall trees and the overgrown weeds his visibility was horrible.
The weeds poked at Koutarou as he walked through, making it painful to pass.
“Oi, Mackenzie! You’re out there, aren’t you? Hurry up and show yourself!”
The weeds poking at Koutarou started to irritate him and urged him to find Kenji and get out of there.
“Come out and tell me who this girl you’ve hooked up with is!”
Then the feeling of ground beneath Koutarou’s foot suddenly vanished.
”Huh?”
Oh crap, a hole in the ground!?
By the time he noticed, Koutarou had already been swallowed by the ground.

“Ow!”
Suddenly hitting the ground caused Koutarou to exhale sharply, and acute pain shot through the back of his head.
Having fallen, there was good news and bad news.
The good news was that the hole was not all that deep.
The bad news was that Koutarou had hit his head on a rock when he fell.
“Ouch, that hurts… This is all Mackenzie’s fault…”
Koutarou put his hand on his aching head and stood up. Thanks to his unusually sturdy body, he had sustained no real injuries apart from a bump on his head.
“Eh? Where am I?”
Koutarou’s surroundings met his eyes as he stood up.
Despite being the bottom of a hole, it was not pitch black; instead, it was somewhat bright.
It was too bright to be accounted for by the light entering through the hole up above. The light level was comparable to that of an emergency exit sign in a dark hallway.
“Something’s here… Some sort of pedestal and several pillars… Even the floor is paved.”
It was a mysterious place, roughly 10 meters in every direction.
The ground was covered in buried flat slabs, which formed a sturdy floor.
Several pillars about as tall as a person stood on top of the floor, and atop each pillar there was a glowing sphere.
The light in the room came from the spheres’ weak glow.
And as if surrounded by the pillars there was a single pedestal.
On top of the pedestal was a human statue looking down at Koutarou.
“Are these the ruins of that religious building that was supposedly buried around here?”
The statue upon the pedestal looked godlike due to the glow of the spheres on the surrounding pillars.
Had someone said this was a temple, anyone would believe them; it was that kind of mystical place.
“Koutarou…”
The voice that had been calling for Koutarou filled the room.
“That voice again… Hey, is someone here!? Why are you calling my name?”
The surprised Koutarou looked around the room, but he could not see anything moving.
The only thing moving was Koutarou himself…
“Koutarou, I’ve been waiting for you all this time…”
“Waiting? Where are you!? Who are you!?”
Not even Koutarou could believe this was one of Kenji’s pranks.
Koutarou felt doubts about the mysterious voice, but he did not voice them.
“Uwah, wh-what!?”
All of a sudden the statue upon the pedestal began shining. This light, however, was not due to the light from the pillars.
It was the statue itself that had begun to glow.
The light was weak at first, barely noticeable, but soon it began shining brightly.

“Countless days and nights have passed; a never-ending cycle of sun and moon. Just how many times have I dreamed of this moment…”
“The statue? Are you the one talking?”
Another light burst forth from the statue. At first it seemed like normal light, but gradually the luminosity began to assume a shape.
“I am not this statue. This is one of the offerings given to me. Although its purity allows me to use it as the focal point of my power, it is not me.”
Eventually the incandescence assumed the shape of a person. It seemed almost as though the statue had transformed into a human.
“…Koutarou, we finally meet…”
“A girl… ?”
The shaped light overlapped with the statue, revealing the figure of a young girl with calm and gentle eyes.

Commence Invasion!


Corona Convention, Revised
2009/05/01 (Excerpt)
Third Article
The following methods of attacks are prohibited:
・Atomic, Biological, Chemical weapons (ABC weapons) and ammunition based on them.
・Large area destruction weapons and ammunition based on them.
・Any method of attacks that may harm room 106.
・Any method of attacks that may cause loud noise for neighboring households.
・Any method of attacks that Kasagi Shizuka (Landlord of Corona House, residing in room 206) has prohibited in the past.
Commence Invasion!
April 5th (Sn)

White light shone down.
"...Wh-what?"
Waking up, Koutarou found himself lying down and staring up at a fluorescent light on the ceiling.
"Why am I lying down? And where is this?"
"You finally woke up?"
Koutarou blinked a couple of times as his eyes adjusted to the light, and Kenji's face fell into focus.
"Mackenzie?"
"Don't look so dumbfounded. You scared the hell out of me when I heard you suddenly fell at work."
"I fell?"
"Yeah, you slipped and fell. Supposedly that's when you got that bump on the back of your head."
"Ouch, there really is a bump..."
Rubbing his head, Koutarou surveyed the area and found that he was lying in a hospital bed.
"If I remember correctly, there was a large stone over at the area Obaa-chan was digging up..."
Koutarou recalled what he had done before he had woken up in the hospital.
"That old lady was worried about you too."
"I'll make sure to let her know I'm alright later... Anyways, after moving the stone I went back to my assigned area..."
Koutarou stopped and thought for a while, then continued.
"...What happened after that?"
"What would asking me do? You probably slipped and fell there; you were found in the middle of the excavation area."
"Hmm..."
Koutarou tilted his head and pondered.
"What?"
"Hmm... I think there was something else that happened, but..."
Something felt off to Koutarou, but the bump on the back of his head and his location in the middle of the excavation site made Kenji's conclusion seem very likely.
However, that explanation did not satisfy Koutarou.
"Don't be stupid. Maybe you were dreaming?"
"Hmm..."
As Koutarou was crossing his arms and trying to remember, the nurse in charge of Koutarou came into the room pushing a cart.
"Oh, you're awake."
"Thanks to you."
Kenji, who had met with the nurse before, gave her a light bow.
"Fufu, shouldn't you be grateful to your partner?"
The smiling nurse peeked at Koutarou's face.
"Grateful?"
"Yes, Kenji-kun sat beside you the entire time with a worried look on his face."
"Mi-miss!?"

“There’s no need to be embarrassed, Kenji-kun; that’s very cute of you. Or maybe the two of you are going out?”
“Not at all…”
Kenji coldly denied the question.
“Yes, actually. The two of us are lovers.”
Koutarou, on the other hand, swiftly confirmed it.
“So you really are going out! H-hey, which one of you is the bottom!?”
“Hey now…”
“Idiot!”
Kenji threw a punch at Koutarou to shut him up.
“Ouch!”
“Stop it Kenji-kun! There’s no reason to hit your lover on the head like that!”
“Please stop saying such horrifying things!”
Satisfied by Kenji’s reaction, the nurse pointed at the bandages around Koutarou’s head.
“Fufufu, I’m sorry. But as you can see, Koutarou is injured, so please don’t hit him too much.”
“I’m sorry. My bad, Kou.”
“Don’t worry about it.”
“Now that that’s settled… Here you go, Satomi-kun.”
The nurse reached into to the cart she had been pushing, pulled out a thermometer, and handed it over to Koutarou.
“Could you measure your temperature with that? Just to be safe.”
“Yes, of course.”
“When you’re done with that you can go home for today, but if you notice any changes to your body you have to come back, okay?”
“Got it.”
“Good, I’ll leave the rest to you, Kenji-kun. Please hand this file over to the cashier on your way out.”
“Got it. Thank you.”
“Goodbye then, you two.”
The smiling nurse waved her hand at the pair and turned her back to move on to the next patient.
“Hey, Mackenzie.”
“Hm?”
Kenji, who had been flipping through the file, looked up at Koutarou.
“Are you aiming for that nurse this time?”
“Idiot!”
Kenji raised his fist at Koutarou, but remembering the nurse’s words, he held back from hitting his head again.
“Really, I can’t believe you…”
Instead, Kenji sighed.
“Sorry, sorry.”
Koutarou placed the thermometer in his armpit, grinning.

Leaving the hospital room, Koutarou passed by the cashier whom he left to Kenji and headed for the hospital's drugstore.
Koutarou had injuries apart from the bump, so just to be on the safe side he went looking for medicine he might need.
"This way..."
Koutarou followed the direction board hung up on a corner into a hallway.
The drugstore was at the end of the straight hallway, but Koutarou's feet had stopped just before it.
By chance he had seen a familiar face through a window.
"That's Sakuraba-senpai... What's she doing in a place like this?"
Koutarou saw the figure of the Knitting Society's club president.
She was sitting on a bench in the hospital courtyard doing something.
"Hmm..."
Deciding to leave the drugstore for later, he passed through the glass door leading to the courtyard.

The early spring sun shone on the courtyard, illuminating it.
Since the courtyard was surrounded by hospital walls there was next to no wind passing through.
Because of that, the courtyard was much more comfortable than the hospital hallways, making this an obvious place for the hospitalized children to play every day.
When Koutarou came in, however, the children were completely silent and seated on the paved ground, listening intently to the person who had sat down on the bench.
Upon said bench sat a young girl wearing a cardigan over her pajamas.
She was one year older than Koutarou, but her lily-white skin and delicate figure made her look younger.
Her name was Sakuraba Harumi.
She was the club president of the Knitting Society that Koutarou was joining.
"And the North Wind said: 'With my power I'll blow the travelers' clothes right off! I'll prove that I'm stronger than the Sun.'"
She was currently in the middle of reading out loud to the children around her.
The book was open on her lap, and she spoke with a calm and gentle expression on her face..
"However, the Sun would not be defeated. He said to the North Wind – Oh? Hey, who's the one who scribbled on this page?"
"Hiromi, it was you, wasn't it?"
"It wasn't me!"
"It was Saya-chan, I saw her!"
"Is that true, Saya-chan?"
"...Y-yes ..."
"I see... You shouldn't have done that, Saya-chan. This book belongs to everyone."
"Yes... I'm sorry."
"As long as you understand. I won't be mad if you know what you did was wrong and regret it."
Harumi and the children wore bright expressions on their faces.

Koutarou found the sight of the diligent, smiling Harumi talking to the children refreshing.
It'd be best not to disturb her...
Koutarou decided not to call out to Harumi and instead sat down behind the row of children.
Fortunately, she did not notice him.
"Onee-chan, keep reading!"
"Okay, I will."
"I'm sure this is where the Sun fights back!"
"What was it they said on TV the other day?"
"Hey batter, batter, batter!"
"That's it!"
"Everyone, you shouldn't be watching those kind of channels yet! Wait until you get older!"
"Everyone, don't become that kind of adult, okay?"
"Okaaaay."

Heeeh... Senpai can make that kind of face as well...
Watching the children play with Harumi, Koutarou thought back to when he first met her.
Koutarou and Harumi had first met about a month ago on the 1st of March.
Koutarou had gone to the school that day to find out his entrance exam results.
Unfortunately, the skies were cloudy that day, and even though they had entered March it was still cold, thanks to the weather.
"The Soccer Club is recruiting, we're looking for fresh meat!"
"The Chorus Club is recruiting! Last year we placed second in the chorus tournament, and this year we're aiming for first place! Please lend us your strength!"
"We're not just fat people, we're fat people who can move! We're looking for those of you concerned about your weight! Welcome to the Sumo Wrestling Club! Feel free to visit!"
"Withdraw! We're the true strong men here, the Karate Club! Withdraw, and don't forget to take your bellies with you!"
"What was that!? Just try saying that one more time!"
Despite the weather, Kitsushouharukaze's schoolyard was being warmed by the hot blooded recruiters.
It was a battle to recruit new members.
At Kitsushouharukaze, club activities were actively participated in.

Moreover, there were a lot of club events; many more than at a normal high school. In fact, those activities had become normal parts of their school lives.
The more members a club had, the more power it held within the school, which was why every club was desperate to recruit as many members are possible.
As a result, recruitment started earlier and earlier each year, and eventually it began to be held during the day exam results were announced.
Peacefully waiting until the entrance ceremony would leave a club with no members to recruit.
As such, the schoolyard was filled with recruiters trying to lure in students who had let their guards down after being accepted.
“Th-the Knitting Society is recruiting… Would you like to join the Knitting Society?”
Harumi was one of the recruiters.
“Ah… Please, at least listen, please…”
However, the recruiting was not going well.
The Knitting Society had been small to begin with, and the person recruiting, Harumi, was shy and withdrawn.
Her voice was small and weak, and was erased by the surrounding chaos of recruitment.
“Hey, if I join the Knitting Society will you go out with me?”
“Um, that would… Trouble me…”
The ones she could attract were good-for-nothing people who were only interested in her appearance.
She was unable to find the kind of club members she had been wishing for.
“…. Hmm?”
That Koutarou noticed her was just a coincidence.
He had been passing nearby when Harumi’s small cry for help entered his ears.
If at the time she had been recruiting like normal, he might not even have noticed her existence.
“Please stop it! Let go!”
“You want members, and I want to go out with you. It’s a win/win situation, don’t you think?”
“This society was not made for things like that!”
“You’re lacking members, right? Face reality!”
“No! Let go of me!”
A persistent, sleazy boy and a powerless, slender girl trying to escape from him.
The girl seemed to be recruiting members for a club, and the boy seemed to be hitting on her.
Koutarou, picking up on the severity of the situation at a glance, approached the boy and girl.
Would you at least think about what you’re doing? Geez.
Hearing the boy’s selfish excuses irritated Koutarou.
“Welcome~ Oh my, aren’t you a good looking man~”
Koutarou spoke up in a flamboyant feminine voice and embraced the boy.
“Wh-what!?”
“You’re joining our club, aren’t you? I’m so happy, you’re just my type!”
“Le-Let go! Who are you!?”
Surprised by Koutarou’s sudden hug, the boy let go of the girl’s hand.

Noticing this, Koutarou kept talking to the boy whilst tearing him away from the girl.
“Oh, I thought you wanted to go out with me?”
“Wh-Who would want to go out with someone like you!?”
“You want to go out with someone, and I want to go out with a boy. It’s a win/win, don’t you think?”
“It’s a lose/lose! Let go of me, you freak!”
“Don’t be so cold♪”
Koutarou swung the boy around and let go.
“So, you’ll join, right?”
“Who the hell would join this plain, boring society when a freak like you is in it!”
“Oh, I’m sorry to hear that.”
“Ueh, I’m starting to feel sick…”
Throwing out those words, the boy turned his back to Koutarou and ran away.
He had only started up a conversation because he had seen a cute girl, and he had left just as easily as he had come.
“There’s just too many idiots during spring for me… I hope he’s not one of my classmates.”
Koutarou said with a sigh, having safely resolved the incident.
Even after the boy had run out of sight, Koutarou kept staring in the direction he had ran in for a while.
“Uhm, Thank you very much.”
“Wh-what!?”
A sudden voice surprised Koutarou and he let out an odd sound.
“Ah, I’m sorry for surprising you!”
The voice belonged to the girl who had been with the boy. Having startled Koutarou, she frantically bowed her head.
“Uh, no, I’m sorry for being so startled. That’s right, Senpai was here too…”
Being so irritated at the boy, Koutarou had completely forgotten about the girl.
“…He was very persistent. You were a big help.”
“Sorry, actually. I was out of line, and I even drove away a potential club member when you’re out here recruiting.”
“No, that’s okay. That person wasn’t interested in knitting anyways.”
The girl’s expression finally loosened up.
This girl’s eyes look very gentle.
The girl left a very calm and gentle impression, and just looking at her made Koutarou feel at ease.
“Knitting?”
“Yes… I’m the president of the Knitting Society.”
“The Knitting Society…”
The girl was seated by a receptionist’s desk, where the words ‘Knitting Society’ were written and hung.
“…I’m sure it’s not very interesting for most men…”
The girl’s face turned gloomy and she lowered her head slightly.
Koutarou sensed that the club was severely lacking in members.

“That’s true; even I–”
Koutarou was about to nod in agreement when suddenly he remembered the precious half-knitted sweater he was keeping safely wrapped up at home.
If I join this society, I might be able to…
“Excuse me, Senpai.”
“Yes?”
“If I join this society, would I get better at knitting?”
“Of course; that’s why the society exists.”
The girl nodded her head.
“Would it be possible for a complete amateur to knit a sweater?”
“I’m sure it would be next to impossible at first, but if you keep at it, surely.”
“Would it be possible, even if I was clumsy?”
Koutarou raised both his hands and showed his fingers to the girl. Looking at his hands the girl nodded.
“You’ll be fine. In the end training and effort is more important than dexterity.”
“That’s my specialty. I’m the athletic type, after all.”
After speaking for a while, Koutarou made his decision.
After his dad’s sudden transfer, he was unable to continue with baseball, so there wasn’t much to worry about.
“Um, wo-would you like to join?”
The girl’s expression brightened. From the flow of the conversation, the girl sensed that Koutarou might be interested in joining.
“Yes, if it’s not too much trouble I’d like to join. Do you mind?”
“Of course not! We-welcome!”
As if really happy, the girl hurriedly welcomed Koutarou.
“This way please! Th-there’s an application form to fill out!”
“Of course.”
Koutarou followed the girl’s lead.
”I’m Satomi Koutarou. Pleased to meet you.”
“Oh no, that’s right…”
The shy girl made a small, embarrassed smile.
It quickly changed into a big smile, however.
“I’m Harumi. Sakuraba Harumi, The president of the Knitting Society.”
This was Koutarou and Harumi’s first meeting.

“Satomi-kun, if you were here you should’ve said so right away…”
“Hahaha, Senpai looked like she was having so much fun with the children, so I would feel bad just butting in.”
Koutarou and Harumi sat on the bench, watching the lively children, who had split into groups, running around the courtyard.

“Do you normally come here, Sakuraba-senpai?”
“Yes. Ever since I was a child, I’ve had a weak constitution, and every now and then I’m hospitalized and examined. Because school starts tomorrow, I wanted to make sure there was nothing wrong.”
“And, do you play with the children every time you come to the hospital?”
“…Yes”
Harumi had a calm gaze, though she blushed slightly.
“Onee-chan!”
“Is he bullying you? Should we get him!?”
The children loved Harumi. Just from this little exchange that became very clear to Koutarou.
That’s why Koutarou figured they had known each other for a long time.
“It’s okay! This person is my friend!”
“Oh, okay.”
“Take a hint!”
“It’s an adult…”
“Adult! Adult!”
Satisfied, the children began playing again.
“I’m sorry, Satomi-kun; they’re just unused to new young people.”
“It’s fine. I’m your friend, right?”
“…Yes, a precious friend”
Nodding to Koutarou’s words, Harumi began looking at the playing children once more.
Her eyes were incredibly gentle. Harumi also loved the children.
“So why are you in the hospital, Satomi-kun?”
“Is it that unexpected?”
“Yes, you look so healthy and energetic.”
“I’m not sick, I’m hurt. Here, look…”
Koutarou turned around and showed the back of his head.
Although the bandages wrapped around his head had been removed, the bump and a band aid were still there.
“Are you okay?”
When Koutarou turned back to Harumi, she bore a worried look on her face.
“It’s just a bump and a small cut. It’s nothing, really.”
“Oh good… But how did you get hurt?”
Harumi breathed out, relieved, and then tilted her head slightly.
“Actually, I tripped and hit my head during my job. Hahaha, I guess I’m too energetic.”
Koutarou spoke happily, shoulders high, but Harumi looked worriedly at Koutarou’s head.
“…Are you sure you’re alright?”
“I’m alright. It’s not like I can get any dumber than this anyways.”
“If you say so…”
“Fufu, don’t worry so much, Sakuraba-senpai.”
“Head injuries are pretty bad, you know? Besides, you’re a member of the Society after all.”

“I see, so it’s the club you’re worried about?”
“The club? No! I’m not…”
Harumi’s face turned red once again while Koutarou laughed to himself.
“Kukuku, ahahaha!”
“Oh you, Satomi-kun.”
While Harumi was pouting, one of the children thrust her face between Koutarou and Harumi.
“Ah!”
“Kyaa!”
The child was one of the older girls who had climbed over the backrest of the bench, and she had surprised Koutarou and Harumi.
“Did I scare you? Are you Onee-chan’s boyfriend?”
“Bo-boyfriend!?”
Harumi, who was not accustomed to this kind of topic, was left speechless, and she stared in amazement.
“Ahaha! That would be nice, but I’m not her boyfriend. In fact, I’m her apprentice.”
“Apprentice in what?”
“In knitting. I’ll start learning it from her starting the day after tomorrow.”
The Knitting Society’s activities started the day after the entrance ceremony. In other words, Tuesday, which was the day after tomorrow.
“I see… Onee-chan is good at knitting, after all.”
Satisfied, the girl smiled.
It seems Harumi’s knitting skill was well known even in the hospital.

“Hey! Kou! Where are you!?”
Following those words, Kenji showed up at the entrance to the courtyard.
“Ah…”
Harumi suddenly got a bit flustered.
“Mackenzie! Over here!”
Not noticing her change, Koutarou waved his hand as he called Kenji over.
“You idiot, what about the medicine!?”
“Oh crap, I forgot!”
Koutarou jumped off the bench and ran towards Kenji.
“Hey, Onee-chan.”
The young girl, looking at Koutarou’s back, whispered to Harumi.
“Yes?”
“Are you sure he’s not your boyfriend?”
“He’s not! He’s a classmate and I made a promise to teach him how to knit, that’s all.”
“You’re lying! He’s the only guy you don’t get flustered around.”
“Th-that’s not…”
Harumi hurriedly denied it, but the young girl was right.

Harumi had only met with Koutarou a few times since announcement day, so they were not all that close.
Usually, she would be unable to even talk to a man at this point.
“It’s not?”
“…Um…”
However, oddly enough, Harumi didn’t have her guard up around Koutarou at all.
Harumi was also perplexed by this.
“Sa-Satomi-kun is…”
As Harumi was muttering his name, Koutarou joined up with Kenji and turned towards Harumi.
“Senpai! I’ll be leaving now, but I’ll see you again the day after tomorrow!”
“Ye-Yes! We’ll see each other the day after tomorrow, Satomi-kun!”
“Goodbye!”
Koutarou bowed deeply and left the courtyard with Kenji.
“…”
Harumi held her hands in front of her chest and stared at Koutarou’s back.
“…So you’re not lovers, but you’re interested in him, right?”
Observing Harumi’s actions, that was the conclusion the girl had come to.
“Ehhhh!?”
Harumi’s face turned bright red and she was at a loss for words. She desperately started looking for words to deny it, but she couldn’t think of anything that she could say that would deny her feelings for Koutarou.
“It’s okay, it’ll be our secret!”
“…”
In the end, Harumi was unable to say anything to the smiling girl. The silence continued.

“Does she hate me or something?”
“What?”
“When I called out to you she looked she got really nervous all of a sudden, remember?”
“Really?”
“…Please, at least notice something that obvious.”
Kenji smiled wryly to Koutarou while getting on his bike.
Kenji had left his bike at Corona House.
Normally he traveled by train to the closest station, and from there he would ride his bike to Koutarou. After meeting up, the two of them would walk to school.
“I don’t know if she hates you or not, but if an enemy to all women like you approaches Senpai she’ll be tainted. Don’t get anywhere near her. Shoo, shoo!”
“Come on now…”
Koutarou smiled at Kenji’s reaction, but he soon made a serious expression again.
“To be honest, though, it seems Senpai is a bit shy…”
Although they had only talked a few times, Koutarou had picked up on that.

“Hmm, she seems to do fine with you, though…”
“A lot of things happened when we met, after all.”
“Ah, that time with a real enemy of all women?”
“That’s right. It seems she’s a bit thankful, and after that we’ve met by coincidence a few times, so it’s probably because of that.”
The normally quiet and shy Harumi would probably treat Koutarou the same if not for the events that had transpired when they had first met.
At least, that’s how Koutarou thought of it.
“That’s how it is, so until she gets used to you just keep your distance, Mr. Enemy-of-All-Women.”
“Would you stop calling me that!?”
Kenji was usually the one who was popular with women.
“Just understand that you’ll be rejected, Mackenzie-kun.”
“Fine, fine.”
Kenji was well aware that it was a joke, and he smiled wryly as he turned his bike around.
“Well then, Kou. Tomorrow’s the entrance ceremony, so make sure you get to bed early.”
“I get it, I get it. Don’t worry so much! I woke up just fine today, you know.”
“You have a point. See you tomorrow, then.”
“Yeah, see you.”
Kenji started riding towards the station, while Koutarou began walking back to Corona House.

With a click the door to Room 106 became unlocked.
Although the door looked old, Shizuka would properly replace the locks every time a new tenant moved in.
The door opened without any noise, as it had been well maintained.
“I’m back…”
Koutarou said while entering the empty room.
It sure is boring coming home to an empty house.
Unexpectedly, the thought of Koutarou’s mother crossed his mind.
It had been a sight he would always see when he came home up until a few years ago.
“You’re finally back, you thick-headed man!”
However, a voice came from the back of the room, interrupting his nostalgic moment.
“What!?”
Koutarou quickly threw off his shoes and headed for the inner room.
“You didn’t notice anything yesterday, but today I’ll make sure to chase you out!”
In the inner room Koutarou saw a small girl wearing a summer dress.
She looked like she was several years younger than Koutarou, and from her small body she appeared to be a grade-schooler.
With powerful eyebrows and large eyes, she left quite an impression.
“Plan Number One! Start up with the noise even though it’s the evening!”
Koutarou wasn’t sure if she had noticed him or not, but she started beating the furniture with both of

her hands in the middle of the room.
“What?...”
Running back and forth across the room, the girl ardently beat furniture and boxes, leaving Koutarou astonished.
What’s this girl doing?
Koutarou was too surprised about what the girl was doing to think about how she got in.
“It was a mistake trying to scare this thick-headed man in the night! Starting the noise when he’s awake – I’m on fire today!”
The girl wandered around the room beating on everything she could.
“How about you start getting scared, thick-headed man? It’s a paranormal phenomenon!”
And finally the girl turned her head towards Koutarou, who had been staring at her in astonishment, and their eyes met.
“...”
“And with that, you’ll be running away!”
“...Huh?”
The girl stopped beating on the furniture.
And the two then stared at each other for a while.
“...”
“...”
“...What are you doing here?”
Koutarou was the one who broke the silence.
Koutarou pointed at the girl, who had her hands clasped together, and asked her, dumbfounded.
Coming home tired and seeing a girl dancing like she was crazy would make anyone feel the same.
“Eeeeeh!?”
The girl’s eyes opened wide in surprise.
“He-Hey you! Can you see me!?”
The girl leaned forward and brought her face closer to Koutarou.
“Of course I can see you. What are you even talking about?”
“You don’t just see me, but you can hear my voice too!?”
“Stop talking nonsense and...”
Not understanding what the girl was talking about, Koutarou tilted his head in confusion.
“Because you couldn’t see me yesterday, and you couldn’t hear my voice either!”
“Hah?”
The girl’s words left Koutarou speechless, he was confused.
“Like I’m telling you! No matter what I did to you, you wouldn’t notice anything at all — that’s what I’m saying! But why is it that you can see and hear me today!?”
“Wait, wait, explain yourself properly! I’ll never understand anything if you talk like that. And before that, who are you? How did you get in here!?”
“My name is Higashihongan Sanae, and I’m a resident of this room! I didn’t get in here from anywhere, you’re the one who came to me!”

“Ah? This room’s resident?... Wait a minute...”
“Wh-what now?”
Koutarou left the puzzled girl behind and opened the door to peek at the door plate.
Room 106, Satomi Koutarou.
“I’m in the right room after all...”
Confirming that, Koutarou quickly returned to the inner room. He had been a bit worried he had accidentally entered the wrong room.
“This is my room. I’m the one who’s renting it from the landlord!”
“This is my room! I’ve always lived here, so get out!”
“I’m the one who’s renting it, so why do I have to leave my own room!”
“Shut up, shut up, shut up!! If I’m not here, mom and dad will be troubled!”
The discussion wasn’t getting anywhere.
“...Hmm...”
The troubled Koutarou tried to piece together the situation. He folded his arms together as he went through the events that led up to this in his head.
As soon as I get home, there’s some girl I’ve never seen before. She’s insisting that this has been her room for a while. However, she was nowhere to be seen yesterday. And there’s no way landlord-san would rent out the room to two people at the same time...
“Which means, this girl is...”
“Wh-what, just staring at me like that?”
To Koutarou, this girl was just someone who had entered his room without permission.
Additionally, her reason for being there didn’t make any sense. Since he hadn’t seen her at all yesterday, he was sure she was just making it up.
She was just a kid from the neighborhood who had found the door unlocked and came in to play.
That was Koutarou’s conclusion.
“Alright.”
As soon as Koutarou reached a conclusion he rushed into action.
“No problem, no problem.”
“Kyaa! What are you doing all of a sudden!?”
Koutarou captured the collar of her summer dress and lifted her up, and then headed for the door with her dangling in the air.
“It’s almost bedtime for kids, so hurry up and go home!”
“Let go! Just because I’m a kid doesn’t mean you can just...! Wait, you’re touching me! How!?”
The girl tried to wrestle free, but because of the difference in their strength nothing happened.
“No ‘how’s’ or ‘what’s’! Go home!”
“But you couldn’t touch me yesterday! You just passed through!”
“You’re making no sense, so just go home. A lot of things happened today and I’m tired.”
Koutarou threw the girl out and closed the door.
“Hmm, to just let someone break in like that... I’ll need to make sure I lock the door from now on.”
With a click, Koutarou made sure to lock the door. He sighed as he made his way to the inner room.

“What do you think you’re doing all of a sudden!?”
“Eh?”
However, in the inner room he found the girl he had just thrown out.
The girls face was dyed red with anger, and she angrily approached Koutarou.
However, since she was small and had a rather cute face, she was unable to intimidate him.
“You again? How did you get in here?”
Koutarou quickly took a look at the window, but it had remained closed.
Besides, too little time had passed for her to have been able to run around the house.
“I passed through the wall, obviously.”
“You passed through the wall?”
Koutarou gazed at the wall behind her, but all he saw was the newly replaced white tapestry.
“I don’t see any holes…”
“Of course not! I’m a gh-”
“I got it! It’s one of those magic tricks, right!?”
Koutarou’s eyes sparkled. He had seen magicians pass through walls on TV, so he completely mistook her for a magician.
“Eh?”
“One more time! Show me one more time!”
“Kyaa!? A-again!? How can you touch me!? No one’s been able to do that before!”
“Come on, don’t be so stingy. Do it one more time!”
The girl was thrown outside once more.
“Kyaa! Just hear me out, will you!?”
“Come on, come on!”
However, Koutarou wasn’t listening to her at all; he was convinced she was a genius child magician.
“Kyaa!”
“I’m begging you!”
Koutarou threw her out and closed and locked the door again, excitedly waiting for the girl to get back inside.
However, something unexpected happened.
“Would you give it a break!!”
“Wah!”
Surprisingly, the girl’s face projected from the door. It was almost as if a hole just for her face had opened.
“You often get told you don’t listen very well, don’t you!”
“Ho-how are you, why are you-!?”
And as Koutarou was watching the girls body passed through the door.
“Move out of the way!”
“Kyaa! Again!?”
Koutarou pushed the girl away and examined the door.

However, there was not a single scratch on it.
There was nothing that would allow her to pass through the door.
“How did you do that!?”
“I did it! You’re surprised! That’s what I’ve been waiting for!”
Koutarou finally gave her the kind of reaction she had been expecting.
This pleased her greatly, and a smile appeared on her face.
“.. Oh, right, I’m not supposed to get excited.”
“Just who are you? How did you get in?”
The girl put on a big grin.
“I told you, didn’t I? I passed through the wall, and I’m Sanae. Higashihongan Sanae.”
“Sanae?...”
“I’m the ghost who’s been haunting this room!”
As the girl said that, Koutarou acted far more surprised than when she had passed through the wall.
“Whaaaaaaat!? A ghost!?”
“You can’t believe it, right? But a normal person can’t do this!”
“Yo-You’re floating!?”
“Of course I float; I’m a ghost after all.”
Sanae floated up towards the ceiling and looked down on the surprised Koutarou, laughing.
Having gone unnoticed by Koutarou all this time, she was very pleased.
“A ghost... I had heard the stories from Landlord-san, but to think you were real...”
Koutarou had heard the stories from his landlord Shizuka, but he had never thought he’d see it for himself.
However, Sanae was right before his eyes, so he had no choice but to believe it.
A normal person can’t pass through walls or float in the air.
“So that means you’re the ghost that’s been appearing in this room?”
“You finally understand! That’s right, I’m the true master of this room!”
“Which means you’re the one who chased out all the previous tenants?”
“That’s right! It’s my home, after all.”
Sanae landed on the floor.
“...You’re a ghost, so why do you have legs[1]?”
“What does it matter? That’s not what should be surprising you!”

1 Ghosts are commonly described as having see-through or no legs in Japanese folklore

“Even if you say that… I can clearly see, hear and touch you, you know? Until you passed through the wall, I thought you were just some kid.”
Because of that, Koutarou wasn’t panicking at all; after all, she looked just like a normal girl.
“Th-that’s what I want to know! Why can you sense me all of a sudden?”
“What are you talking about?”
“Yesterday, even if I stood right in front of you or shouted right next to your ear, you wouldn’t notice me at all! I even passed through your body when I tried to tackle you.”
“Even if you ask me…”
In other words, Sanae had been in the room with Koutarou since yesterday, always watching him.
“I don’t understand it either. The only out-of-the-ordinary thing that happened today was that I fell and hit my head.”
Koutarou turned around and pointed to the band-aid on the back of his head.
“You hit your head and now you can see ghosts? Stop with the nonsense!”
“I don’t want to hear that from you! You paranormal phenomenon!”
“Uu…”
Aware that she was the odd one out, Sanae recoiled slightly.
“Th-that doesn’t matter! Now that you can hear me, we can get down to business!”
“You’re the one who brought it up…”
“Shut up! Shut up!”
“And, what business?”
Sanae regained her composure after hearing Koutarou’s words and opened her mouth.
“That’s obvious! This is my home, so get out!”
“I see… that’s a bold statement.”
“It’s not bold at all; it’s a given.”
As she said that, several small lightning-like phenomena began crackling around her, as though she was discharging them herself.
“And what if I say no?”
“I’ll just do what I always do…”
As Sanae raised her hand towards Koutarou, suspicious energy could be seen flickering at the tip of her finger.
It was what one might call a will-o’-wisp, but Koutarou didn’t know that.
This girl wants to fight, huh…
Koutarou felt Sanae’s intention to fight, brought his body lower to the ground, and took a stance.
“Today I’m in top condition, so hitting you with this won’t just surprise you!”

The energy mass at the tip of Sanae’s finger grew larger. It went from being as small as a firefly to the size of a baseball.
Getting hit by that would be bad…
Koutarou didn’t know what the light was, but he instinctively sensed danger and swallowed his saliva.
Even though she’s a ghost I can touch her, so it’s not like I don’t stand a chance.

Koutarou, who was normally quick to pick a fight, clenched his fists as he steeled himself.
"...That's a coincidence. I'm in top condition today too."
"I see, what a coincidence... Fufufu, ahahahaha!"
"Wahahahaha!"
Laughter and tension filled the room.
The fight was about to start.

The sound of a delivery truck passing by the apartment served as a gong, and the pair started moving.
"Eat this~!"
Sanae threw the glowing ball at Koutarou.
"Uwah!?"
However, Koutarou quickly lowered his body, and the ball passed through the area where his face had been.
The ball hit a wall and disappeared, leaving behind a sound similar to a loud clap.
"You nimble bastard!"
"And that's not all!"
Koutarou rushed towards Sanae, and since it was a small room he quickly reached her.
He swung his right hand.
"Kyaa!?"
However, Sanae avoided his attack by passing through the wall behind her, which was a fitting way for a ghost to dodge.
Because of that, the only thing Koutarou could touch was the ends of her hair.
"That's right, you're a ghost. But I hit you, and I can still do this!"
As Koutarou confirmed the sensation of grazing her hair, Sanae entered the room once more.
"That's dangerous!"
"Like you're one to talk!"
"It's a given that ghosts attack residents! Counterattacking is against the rules!"
"Like I care!"
"Get beaten or get out!"
"Not a chance! I finally found a place to live!"
Koutarou didn't want to burden his father, who had raised him alone, any further.
And because the rent here was just 5,000 yen, Koutarou could afford it with just his part time job.
The only problem was the ghost laughing before his eyes.
Koutarou didn't have the choice to just leave.
"Like I'll leave because of a single ghost! I need this room to live a fulfilling high school live!"
"I don't care about that! Get out! This is my home!"
Both of Sanae's hands began glowing, and a ball of light formed above each hand. It was clear that she was planning on throwing both of them at Koutarou.
"So you're finally getting serious..."
Koutarou took a stance.

“This time won’t be the same as before!”
Two orbs materialized in Sanae’s palms, and this time they were slightly larger than before.
Dodging two of them would be much more difficult due to their size and power.
As Sanae had said, the danger had increased.
“As if I’d let you!”
If that’s the case I just need to keep her from attacking!
Koutarou quickly made a decision and rushed towards Sanae, reaching out with his hand.
“Kyaa!?”
“I’ve got youuuu!”
Koutarou’s right hand captured Sanae’s left arm, causing the will-o’-wisp in her left hand to fall to the ground.
And like before, the ball hit the floor and disappeared, making a sound reminiscent of a loud clap.
“These aren’t just for throwing!”
“Uwah!”
As Koutarou was following the falling ball, Sanae thrust the ball in her right hand towards Koutarou.
He tried to dodge, but was not fast enough.
“Guwah!?”
As the ball touched Koutarou it disappeared like the two before it. But this time it impacted Koutarou heavily.
It was almost like receiving an electric shock.
“I did it! I don’t know why, but I’m in top condition today!”
“Ku!”
Koutarou was knocked back by the impact and landed on his bottom.
“And now for the finisher!”
Before the fallen Koutarou, Sanae formed two more glowing spheres.
“You’ll be sent to the hospital with defeat written all over your face, and I’ll be able to take back my room!!”
“Yo-you selfish…!”
Koutarou was still stunned from the impact and was unable to move.
Meanwhile, Sanae combined the two balls to form a single large one.
All Koutarou could do was watch.
“If you would’ve just left, it wouldn’t have had to end like this♪”
The ball Sanae was holding over her head grew bigger, and was now roughly the size of a dodgeball.
If the ball from before had been enough to leave Koutarou stunned, then the power of this one didn’t need any explanation.
“This is bad! I’ll get killed!”
Koutarou braced himself, for that was all he could do to prepare for the incoming attack.
“Nyahaahaahaa!”
However, Sanae’s triumphant laughter was interrupted by a small explosion near her feet.
“Kyaa!”

Sent flying by the explosion, Sanae fell over, her head passing through the wall.
At the same time, the will-o'-wisp she had made collided with the wall, leaving behind a large bang.
Seeing that, Koutarou felt a chill run down his spine.
"Owowow..."
Sanae pulled her head from the wall and shook it slightly. This time, it was Sanae who was stunned.
"...What did she step on?"
Koutarou had seen something explode as Sanae stepped on it. Trying to find it, Koutarou approached the spot where she had been standing.
"I see! She stepped on this!"
'Safe Delivery' 'Successful Studies' 'Traffic Safety'
What he found was a bunch of good luck charms he had gotten from his grandmother.
They had been taken out of the cardboard box and left on the floor, and Sanae had stepped on them.
"That's right! You're a ghost, so you're weak to charms!"
Koutarou picked up the charms.
"Wahaha, with this, the tables have turned!"
"Ku!"
Sanae got up and glared at the charms in Koutarou's hand.
"To think you had those kind of things..."
"I have plenty! From wards to Maneki Nekos[1], there's no lack of fortune goods in this room!"
Koutarou hadn't only received charms from his grandmother.
When he had passed his high school exam, she had sent a large amount of those kinds of fortune goods.
"Ku, just how virtuous are you!?"
"Hahaha! It's because of all my good deeds! God is watching!"
Koutarou thrust the charms towards Sanae as he gradually closed in.
Sanae, who had been on the offensive all this time, was gradually pushed towards the entrance with a bitter look on her face.
"Eii!"
Sanae threw three will-o'-wisps towards Koutarou.
"It's no use!"
As the will-o'-wisps touched the charms in Koutarou's hands, they disappeared as though they had melted.
"They don't work!?"
"Stupid, there's no way a charm can't block a ghost's attack. Don't underestimate a Family Safety charm!"
Koutarou grinned and started moving once more.
"It's your turn to leave now, ghost!"
"There's no way I'm leaving! I have to wait here no matter what!"

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1 Literally translated to beckoning cat, it's considered a lucky charm believed to bring good luck to its owner

“Even so, I’m the winner!”
“Not yet!”
At Sanae’s short shout, the nearby items started floating in the air.
A cardboard box, a dictionary, a case filled with small articles.
These kinds of things started floating in mid-air, spinning around her.
“How about this! Poltergeist Attack!”
“Gah!”
The items floating around her started pelting Koutarou all at once.
The charms had no effect on the thrown items.
Koutarou held his head and tried to escape, but some of the items crashed into his body.
“Ouch! What’re you doing!?”
“Nyahahaha! It seems this works!”
“If you hit me straight on I’ll die!”
“Stupid, that’s what I’m trying to do!”
“Dammit!”
“Once more!”
Sanae lifted the nearby luggage into the air once more.
“As if I’ll take any more of this!”
Koutarou picked up his treasured bat, which happened to be lying right in front of him, and prepared to defend himself.
“In this narrow room, how long do you think you can withstand my barrage with that!?”
Sanae sent a couple of items flying at Koutarou.
“Hmph!”
Koutarou swung his bat and blocked the attacks.
“Too slow, ghost! It’s like they’re flying in slow-motion!”
“Curse you!”
Sanae lifted several more items into the air.
Five more again…
In total there were five items floating in the air, a similar amount to the previous times Sanae had attacked.
It seems like her limit is five items at a time…
Koutarou, without getting too careless, readied himself for the next attack.
“Hm?”
At that time, the dictionary floating to the right of Sanae fell onto a tatami mat.
“That’s…”
Next to the fallen dictionary, Koutarou saw the Maneki Neko lying on the floor.
It looked to Koutarou as if the dictionary had fallen when it flew too close.
I guess I’ll give it a try.
When Koutarou made his decision, he tore up one of the charms he was holding together with the bat.
The charm he had torn was ”Safe Delivery”.

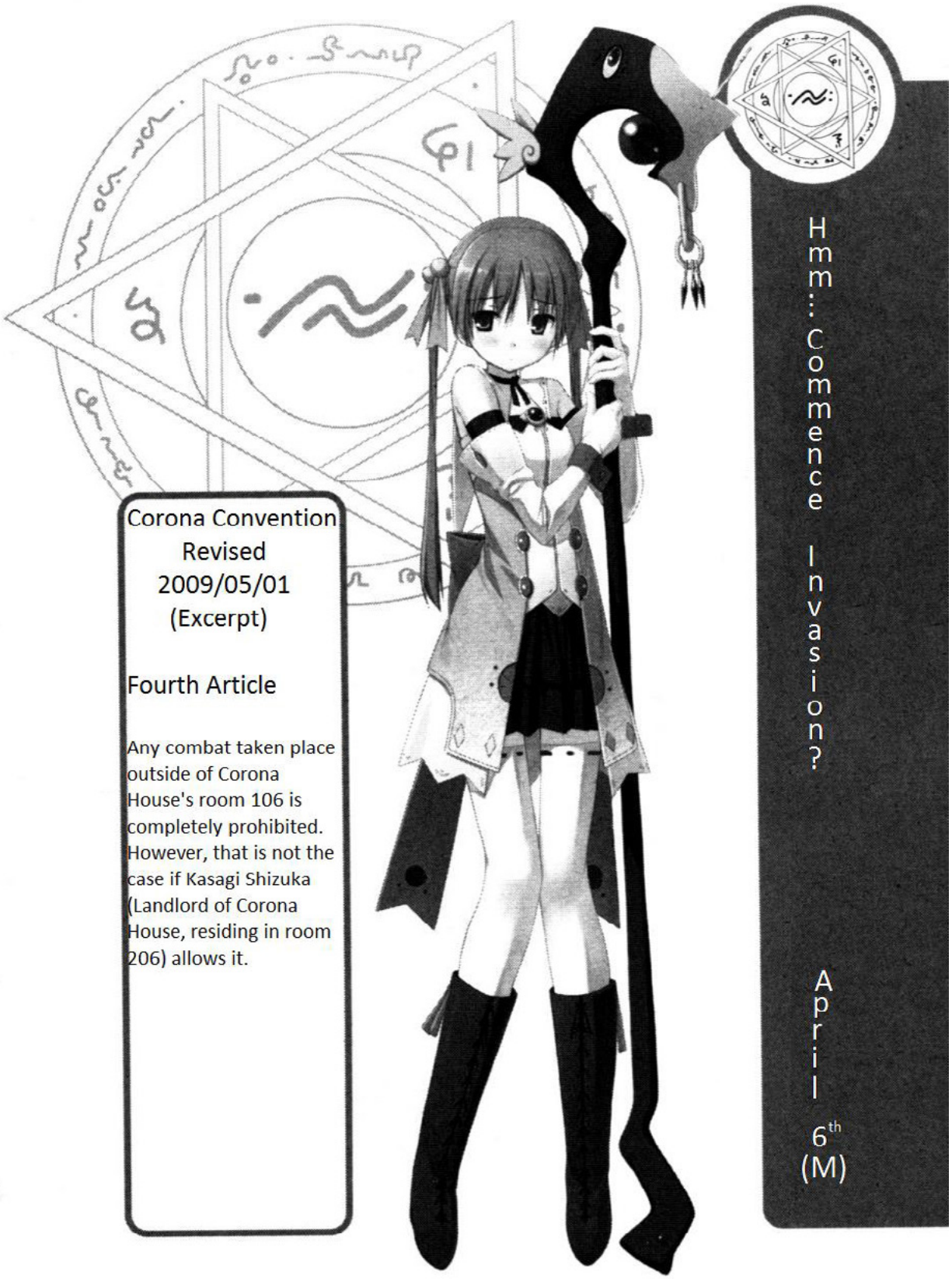
“Ey!”
Koutarou then threw it towards Sanae.
“Owa!?”
Sanae brought the items floating in front of her to shield herself.
The charm hit her makeshift shield and fell down to the tatami mat.
“Don’t surprise me like that!”
“You’ll be even more surprised by this!”
Koutarou had rushed over to pick up the Maneki Neko.
“Wh-what?”
“This guy!”
Koutarou thrust the Maneki Neko out towards Sanae and their eyes met.
“A cat?”
“Look around you!”
“Ah!?”
The items circling Sanae fell to the ground one by one.
“It seems you can’t make items fly next to this guy.”
“Fortune goods!?”
Sanae ground her teeth in frustration and hurriedly ran towards the entrance, where luggage began floating around her once more.
“How about if I attack you from this distance!?”
Sanae threw a tissue box made of plastic at Koutarou.
She only threw a single item, but that item traveled at a great speed.
“It’s no use!”
Even so, as the tissue box approached Koutarou, it stalled and fell to the ground
“Why!?”
As the box had approached the Maneki Neko, it had lost its power.
When the box reached Koutarou, it had already lost most of its momentum and harmlessly bounced off of him.
“The tables have turned again, ghost!”
Koutarou laughed, full of confidence.
“Wh-what!? I’m not losing yet!”
“None of your attacks can reach me, but I can still attack you!”
Koutarou held up the Maneki Neko and lucky charms.
“Hmph! As long as I don’t get close, it’s no big deal!”
“However, with that, you can never chase me out no matter how hard you try. It’s my win, ghost!”
Koutarou triumphantly declared his victory.
“...Hey, you no longer have a chance to win, so just give up and leave. Or better yet, pass on.”
“No way! Why do I have to do something like that? You leave!”
Koutarou tightened his defenses with the Maneki Neko and the two entered a standoff.
Both of them lacked a decisive blow.

All of Sanae's attacks were prevented by the Maneki Neko.
With her Poltergeist Attack she might be able to hit him with small items, but the damage would be next to nothing.
Large heavy items would be stopped by the Maneki Neko before they were be able to hit.
And Sanae herself couldn't approach the Maneki Neko, meaning direct attacks on Koutarou were impossible.
At the same time, Koutarou was unable to defeat Sanae.
He could touch and grab her, and he threw the charms and blew her away as well.
However, Sanae could flee through the walls, making his attacks ineffective.
And because Sanae couldn't come near the Maneki Neko or the charms she would move even faster.
And most importantly, Koutarou didn't know any way of getting her to pass on.
No matter how many times he threw her out of the room or blew her away with the charms, she would just return.
"Why do you insist on haunting this room anyways!?"
"What does it matter! Either way, I have no intention of leaving! This is my home!"
Sanae threw some crumpled up paper at Koutarou, but Koutarou caught it without difficulty and threw it back at Sanae.
"Geez, you're just like a kid."
"You can't be a ghost if you're not childish!"
"...That's an impressive argument."
"Don't treat me like an idiot!"
"You're the one who said it!"
And like that, the two divided the room in half and continued their quarrel.
Every once in a while someone would throw a crumpled piece of paper at the other, but the actual attacks had stopped.
"Since it's come to this, it'll become a test of spirit! I'll haunt you until you give up, and I won't let you sleep during the night either!"
"Go ahead and do it if you think you can! I've been forged by baseball, and my spirit is indomitable! Besides, not being able to sleep goes both ways!"
"You're not cute at all!"
"Like you can talk!"
Like this, the two stared each other down for hours. Night had fallen long ago.

And before they knew it, the doorbell rang.
"Hm?"
"Who is it now, during this busy time!"
Loud, continuous knocking followed after the doorbell.
"Wake up Kou! You'll be late for the entrance ceremony!"
The voice coming from the other side of the door was that of Koutarou's childhood friend Kenji.

“It’s Mackenzie!”
“Mackenzie? Oh, the guy in glasses.”
“Ah! It’s already morning!?”
Looking at the clock hanging on the wall, Koutarou’s eyes shot open.
It was already 7:30AM.
It took about 20 minutes to walk to school, so Koutarou had to leave around 8:00 to make it in time.
And since today was the entrance ceremony, it would be best to get there earlier.
“I can’t just sit around here!”
“Hey, you!”
“We’ll continue this when I get back! I have to get to school first!”
Koutarou opened up the wardrobe and pulled out his uniform and school bag.
“Hey Kou, are you awake?”
“I’m awake, I’m awake! I’m on my way!”
“Oh, you’re awake.”
Koutarou shoved the Maneki Neko and the charms into his bag and started changing.
“Wait, before you go to school we need to settle this, right!?”
“I don’t have time for that, we’ll do that later! I’m only living here so I can go to school! Besides, who would believe me if I said I didn’t show up because of a ghost?!”
“Eeeeeeeeeeeeh!?”
The completely rejected Sanae puffed up her cheeks and glared at Koutarou.
“Don’t start acting up while I’m gone, okay? When I get back we’ll settle this!”
“I got it. I don’t want to start any trouble here either.”
“…You’re the trouble though…”
“You’re the one who’s trouble! I had no problems up until now!”
“I got it, I got it. I got it so until I get back just sit still, okay?”
Sanae nodded reluctantly at Koutarou’s words.
“I got it, so don’t waste any time and hurry back.”
“Yeah!”
And like this, the temporary truce between the two would last until the evening.

Hmm... Commence Invasion?


Hmm... Commence Invasion?
April 6th (M)
Corona Convention
Revised
2009/05/01
(Excerpt)
Fourth Article
Any combat taken place outside of Corona House's room 106 is completely prohibited. However, that is not the case if Kasagi Shizuka (Landlord of Corona House, residing in room 206) allows it.

Koutarou let out a loud yawn.
“You look sleepy, Satomi-kun.”
“I couldn’t really sleep very well last night.”
“That’s unusual for you, Kou.”
Koutarou, Kenji and Shizuka were walking to school together.
The three of them were wearing their brand-new uniforms.
And they were all about to attend Kitsushouharukaze High School’s entrance ceremony.
“Yeah, just a thing yesterday.”
“Did something happen, Satomi-kun?”
The tone of Shizuka’s voice was not the tone of a landlord, but rather that of a friend.
Shizuka’s tone had changed when she started addressing Koutarou as Satomi-kun yesterday.
Koutarou, who was bad with formality, welcomed the change.
“Actually, Landlord-san, that thing appeared.”
“Appeared? You mean…”
“The ghost appeared!?”
“Yes. I couldn’t believe it at first either, but it’s without a doubt the ghost.”
Shizuka and Kenji were amazed by Koutarou’s answer.
“So that’s why it was a bit noisy yesterday…”
“So… So are you okay, Kou!?”
“Calm down, Mackenzie. It’s not that big of a deal. A ghost appeared and some paranormal phenomena occurred, that’s all.”
“O-oh… Well, if you say so…”
Kenji let out a sigh of relief after seeing Koutarou behave as if nothing had happened.
Kenji was not good with scary stories.
“So are you okay, Satomi-kun? Do you think you’ll be able to keep living there?”
As Corona House’s landlord, Shizuka did not just share the same worries as Kenji; she also had another set of worries.
If Koutarou moved out now, Corona House’s reputation would drop even further.
“It’s okay, Landlord-san; it’s not that big of a deal. It’ll be settled within a few days.”
“I see. You’re so reliable, Satomi-kun.”
“Just leave it to me. I’ll deal with it!”
Koutarou pounded his chest as he undertook the task, and Shizuka showed a relieved smile.
Looking at her smile, Koutarou reconfirmed his decision to never run away from his room.
“But to think there really was a ghost…”
“I’m just as sur – huh?”
As Koutarou smiled wryly at Kenji, he noticed the shadow of someone peeping at them from behind a utility pole.
“What’s wrong?”
“Look over there. There’s a girl staring at us…”
“You’re right, but that outfit certainly stands out…”

“I’m not usually one to say this, but… Is she not embarrassed walking around like that?”
It was a girl who seemed to be around the same age as Koutarou.
Although most of her body was hidden by the utility pole, it was not enough to hide the flashiness of her outfit.
She was wearing a colorful and frilly dress that looked like it belonged to an anime heroine.
“Ah.”
Although her voice didn’t reach Koutarou, the way her mouth moved suggested that that was what she had said.
Immediately after that, the girl turned around and fled, vanishing around a nearby corner.
“What was that?”
“Who knows…”
As Koutarou and Kenji looked on in confusion, they could hear the sound of a collision from the corner the girl had run off to.
“Kyaa!?”
“You idiot! Don’t just suddenly jump in front of my bike!”
“I’m sorry! I’m so sorry! It wasn’t on purpose!”
“And what’s with that outfit!? If you’re gonna play, do it elsewhere!”
“I’m sorry! I’m so sorry! I’m not playing! This is part of my job!”

A quarrel could be heard around the corner.
“What was that?”
“Who knows…”
“I wonder if it was the girl from before.”
The trio approached the corner.
“…Who knows what the young are thinking nowadays…”
However, as the three of them peeked around the corner, all they could see was a middle-aged man picking his bike back up.
The girl from before was nowhere to be seen.
“The girl from before probably jumped out and got hit by the bike…”
Kenji concluded as he peeked around the corner.
“I see. I wonder if she’s alright, though…”
Koutarou looked back at the corner that they were moving further and further away from.
“I’m sure she’s fine, Satomi-kun. If not, she would be lying there.”
“You have a point.”
The worried Koutarou smiled slightly after hearing Shizuka’s words.
“That sure was a strange girl, though…”
“It’s spring after all..”
“Now that you mention it, the strange ones come out in droves in the spring, don’t they.”
And the three headed to school as though nothing had happened.

After attending the entrance ceremony and homeroom, Koutarou headed for his work site.
He then worked until nightfall for a total of roughly seven hours.
Because of that, Koutarou and Kenji were both exhausted by the time they reached Corona House.
“I’ll hurry home and get to bed.”
“I wish I could do the same…”
Koutarou sighed next to Kenji, who sat himself down on the bike seat.
“Make sure you get some sleep, okay? You fell asleep during the entrance ceremony, and you don’t want to do that during class!”
“Yeah, I will. See you later, Mackenzie.”
“Yeah.”
Koutarou and Kenji lightly waved to one another and headed for their own destinations. Koutarou headed for his room and Kenji headed for the station.
“…Well then, It’s time to get down to business.”
Koutarou looked back at Kenji and slapped his cheeks with both of his hands to pump himself up.

“What the!?”
What entered Koutarou’s eyes when he opened the door was a mountain made of his furniture, piled up in front of the door.
“I’m helping you move out and building a barrier to defend myself from invaders at the same time!”
Said Sanae smiling as she stuck her head through the mountain of luggage.
“Whatever, move it.”
“Oh come on!”
However, Koutarou showed his bag to Sanae and she disappeared into the room. The Maneki Neko and charms were still in there.
“What a childish thing to… Right, you are a child.”
Koutarou took off his shoes and mumbled as he climbed over the furniture.
Since it was just furniture for a six tatami mat room, there wasn’t a lot of furniture to begin with.
“If you don’t want childish things to happen to you then come back earlier! It was boring just waiting around! Besides, you said you were just attending the entrance ceremony! Why are you coming home so late!?”
“My bad, I had work after the entrance ceremony. Unlike you, I have to earn my living expenses. I don’t want to cause too much trouble for my old man.”
Koutarou started by carrying the TV back to the room.
“Hmm… So you’re having a bit of a hard time too.”
“That’s why I’m not leaving this cheap room!”
“But I’m gonna have you leave!”
The room was completely deserted.
Koutarou sighed as he put the TV down next to the antenna outlet.
“Alright, next is…”

After putting down the TV, Koutarou passed by Sanae, who was lying in wait, and headed for the entrance to move the next piece of furniture.
“Stop! You can do that later, right? What about me!? Besides, you might be about to leave anyways.”
“Ghost, instead of talking, help me move this back. I’m not dealing with you until everything is back where it was.”
“Fine, it can’t be helped…”
And Sanae reluctantly followed Koutarou.
She can be quite obedient from time to time…
Watching Sanae reluctantly help him, Koutarou felt some positive feelings toward her for the first time.

“Is there anything left?”
“No, this is the last one.”
Sanae shook her head and answered Koutarou’s question as she levitated a cardboard box through the air.
“Okay.”
Hearing that Koutarou stopped moving towards the entrance.
“Alright, hand me the box, Sanae.”
“Sanae… ?”
Koutarou stretched his hand out to take the box but Sanae stared at Koutarou in amazement with a surprised expression.
Tears began forming in her eyes.
“What’s wrong?”
Koutarou asked as he noticed and Sanae quickly wiped her eyes.
“It’s nothing! Just some dirt that got in my eye”
“I see”
Since Sanae was a ghost, there was no way dirt could actually get in her eyes, but Koutarou, who didn’t think anything of it, believed her.
“Come on, give it here, Sanae”
“He-here!”
Sanae floated the cardboard box to Koutarou’s hand, who then headed for the wardrobe with it.
“He called me Sanae…”
Sanae whispered as she gazed at Koutarou’s back.
Nobody had called Sanae by her name since she had become a ghost several years ago.
Because of that, Sanae didn’t attack Koutarou, who had both of his hands occupied with the cardboard box with his back turned towards her, and instead gazed at his back, a mysterious emotion welling up within her.

“And that’s it.”
Closing the wardrobe, Koutarou turned back to Sanae.

“Hm, What’s wrong?”
Koutarou noticed the unmoving Sanae.
“I-it’s nothing! That’s right, we still have to settle this!”
“Yeah, we do.”
Koutarou had almost forgotten while he and Sanae were moving back the furniture.
“I have no intention of leaving this–”
Koutarou was interrupted mid-sentence by the sound of his window breaking.
“Kyaa!?”
“What!?”
The surprised Koutarou and Sanae looked at the window, and at the same time that something that was breaking the window flew into the room.
“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”
That something fell flat on its face and rolled across the mat as it screamed.
It crashed into the wall face first and then stopped.
“Wh-what just happened!?”
“Wh-who knows…”
Koutarou and Sanae glanced at each other briefly and took a look at what had flown into the room.
“It looks like a person…”
“Yeah…”
It was a girl who seemed to be around the same age as Koutarou. She had a large bump on the top of her head.
“But what’s with this flashy outfit?”
“Is she not embarrassed walking around like that? You can almost see her breasts from this position.”
What Koutarou and Sanae found odd was her outfit.
It appeared to be a dress abundantly decorated with things such as frills and lace. The colorful design used a lot of pink and primary colors, and the dress itself was quite revealing.
As Sanae said, the girl’s well-shaped breasts looked like they were about to spill out.
And the most noticeable thing was the broom she was straddling.
It was a broom, no doubt about it, but it was not designed for cleaning.
The broom was also colorful and well decorated, and seemed to value design over function.

“She looks like she’s from a fairy tale, like the old witch handing out poisoned apples… Except that this girl’s cuter.”
“She does have a witch feel to her, but doesn’t the outfit look like something an anime heroine would wear?”
“So it’s cosplay…”
“That’s it!”
The two came to a conclusion, and when you thought of it as cosplay it made perfect sense.
“But why would a cosplayer come flying through the window?”
“Who knows… Maybe because it’s spring?”

“Spring… Ah!”
At that point Koutarou recalled the event in the morning.
“I think she’s the one I saw this morning!”
“Morning?”
“I saw her on my way to school! She was hiding behind a utility pole so I can’t say for sure, but it’d be odd for several people to be walking around dressed like this. It must be her!”
“Which means she’s been walking around in this outfit since this morning?”
“…A complete oddball…”
“Yeah…”
With the maniac girl in front of them, the two unintentionally looked at each other with amazed expressions.
“So what do we do about this?”
Sanae repeatedly poked the girl lying unconscious by her feet, but the girl showed no response whatsoever.
The big bump on top of her head and wide open mouth made her look pitiful.

“We can’t just leave her like this. I’ll put out the futon; you go get some water.”
“Okay, I got it.”
The two forgot about their situation and began nursing the unconscious girl.
The girl in question woke up after Koutarou had changed the washcloth they were using to cool off her forehead for the fourth time.
Over three hours had passed, and the time was now 11 PM.
“N-nnnn…”
“Hey, it looks like she’s coming to.”
“Really?”
Sanae rushed over to Koutarou’s futon just as the girl was blinking her eyes repeatedly.
“E-Eh?”
And as her vision regained its focus she could see Koutarou’s and Sanae’s faces.
“Hey.”
“Good morning!”
The girl blinked once more.
“Eh? Uhm… Eh?”
The girl was unable to comprehend the situation.

“Listen. A while ago you flew through my window, hit the wall, and passed out.”
Koutarou pointed at the window covered with newspapers and then at the wall.
“And the two of us took care of you and cleaned up the shattered glass.”
Hearing Sanae’s explanation, the girl’s eyes opened wide as she came back to her senses.
“Ahhhh! I-I’m sorry! I’m so sorry!”
The girl hurriedly got up and repeatedly bowed.
“It wasn’t on purpose!”
Hearing her apology, Koutarou became convinced that it was the girl from the morning. Her voice sounded just like it had back then.
“If it was on purpose, we’d have thrown you out already… That doesn’t matter, though. You’re paying for the repairs.”
“I’m sorry, I’m so sorry! I don’t have any money!”
“Then come through the door! Why would you crash through the window!?”
“I’m sorry, I was in a hurry!”
Attacked by Sanae from the moment she woke up, the girl looked like she was about to cry.
Seeing that, Koutarou decided to give her a hand.
“Don’t nag her too much, Sanae. She might have her reasons for it.”
“But she broke my window, you know?”
“You can get angry later. Let’s start by hearing her story.”
“You wouldn’t even listen to my story!”
Sanae looked like she was ready to erupt.
“Ah… Anyways, let’s just hear what she has to say!”
“Fine, but don’t think this is over…”
Sanae finally backed down after the persistent persuasion, and the two stared at the girl.
“So, what did you come to this room for? Or were you in an accident or something?”
“Uh-uhm…”
The girl flinched as the two glanced at her.
“…Isn’t it just her hobby?”
“You just be quiet, Sanae.”
“Hmph!”
As Sanae turned her pouting face away from Koutarou, the girl slapped her cheeks to pump herself up.
“Fight! Yurika Fight!”
“Actually, this room is in danger.”
Her voice and gaze were more serious than they had been before, as could be seen in her sharp expression.
“Danger? What danger?”
“Explain it properly!”
“There are people trying to steal this room for themselves!”
“Steal it for themselves?”
“That’s…”

Koutarou and Sanae pointed at each other and said in unison:
“Do you mean Sanae?”
“Do you mean Koutarou?”
“It’s not me! This is my room!”
“What are you talking about!? I’m the one living here!”
As the two began to argue, the girl shook her head from side to side.
“No, it’s not either of you.”
“It’s not?”
“Eh? It’s not Koutarou?”
“No. It’s a completely different group.”
The girl clearly asserted as she nodded.
“Who are they!? Are they also after this cheap room!?”
“O-or do they want to make this beautiful ghost their own!?”
“…That won’t happen, ever.”
“Why not!? Don’t be so rude!”
“It’s neither. They’re after the abnormal power that’s concentrated in this room, so please hurry up and run away! It’s dangerous! They will surely appear in a few days!”
“Power? Danger?”
“What’s that supposed to mean?”
Hearing the girl’s explanation, the two looked astonished. To them it was nothing but nonsense.
“Please explain it properly. Even if you tell me to run, it’s not like I’ll just pack up and leave.”
“Yeah. For starters, what’s this power you’re talking about?”
“I want to know too!”
When the two demanded answers from the girl her glance began drifting.
“Uh-uhm… You could call it a naturally overflowing power, or erm… a supernatural power…”
Her convincing attitude started disappearing and she began to stumble over her words.
Beads of sweat began forming on her forehead and she forced herself to smile.
“Aha, aha, ahahaha…”
What? Should I not have asked?
The girl’s fake smile left that impression on Koutarou.

“I don’t understand anything from that kind of explanation! Don’t use a vague word like power and tell me exactly what it is!”
“D-Do I have to?”
“Please do. It might be hard for you to say, but I’m ready to accept most things today.”
“You wouldn’t hear me out though…”
“Since I believe you now, I want to hear this girl’s story from the start.”
“Do-don’t think I’m crazy or that I’m kidding, okay?”
The girl’s uneasy gaze flitted between Koutarou’s and Sanae’s faces several times.
“Don’t worry.”

“Fine, I promise.”
“O-okay, then I’ll tell you…”
The girl nodded and swallowed her saliva.
And after looking at Koutarou’s and Sanae’s faces one more time she finally opened her mouth.
“…Actually, the power in this room is…….”
Though the girl started explaining, her voice quickly became quieter and quieter, and the essential part couldn’t be heard.
“The power is what?”
“I can’t hear you!”
“I-I’m telling you, the power filling this room is ma…”
She really didn’t want to say it.
Her words disappeared for a second time.
And her face was turning red.
“Don’t worry. We won’t laugh at you, so please tell us.”
“That’s right. If you don’t tell us anything, nothing will happen.”
Hearing that from Koutarou and Sanae, the girl pumped herself up once more.
“Yurika Fight! Yurika Fight!”
She then stared straight at Koutarou and Sanae.
And began explaining with large and exaggerated gestures.
“Both of you, please listen! Actually, a large amount of magic power is gathering in this room!”
“Eh?”
“Ma-Magic!?”
“If the magic power keeps gathering at this rate, evil magical girls who plan on misusing its power will soon appear! And this place would become a battleground! So please run away if possible right now!”
The girl loudly declared as she took the broom in her hand and started spinning it.
“I’m the princess of love and courage, Magical Girl Yurika! I will defend the peace in this town!”
Between the oddly practiced pose and the firm beautiful voice, Koutarou and Sanae spaced out for a second.
“Ah, what can you say… Right, Sanae?”
“I know exactly what you want to say. This must be the worst possible development.”
“It’s spring after all…”
“That must be it.”
When Koutarou and Sanae recovered from their dumbfoundedness, the first thing they did was look at each other and let out a big sigh.
“Eh? Eh? What? What are you talking about!?”
“No, it’s nothing. We’re just talking about how it’s much warmer now that it’s spring, really.”
“That’s right.”
Saying that, Koutarou grabbed a hold of the girl, Yurika, the one wearing flashy clothing.
“What? Why are you holding me?”
“No reason, no reason.”

Koutarou smiled at Yurika and headed straight for the entrance.
“That’s right; no reason, no reason.”
Sanae also smiled, using her Poltergeist to carry Yurika’s broom.
“Eh? What? Where are we going?”
“That’s up to you to deciiiiide!”
Opening the front door, Koutarou threw Yurika outside.
“Kyaaaaaa!?”
Yurika fell flat on her face and rolled until she reached Corona House’s concrete wall.
“Here, you forgot this.”
Sanae followed up by throwing the broom at Yurika.
“Kyan.”
The broom hit Yurika’s head. However, neither Koutarou or Sanae bothered watching.

“Fu…”
“Good grief.”
After quickly closing the door, Koutarou and Sanae sighed.
“It’s spring, after all…”
“Isn’t it because last year’s winter was cold?”
“You’re right. It sure got warm all of a sudden…”
Koutarou and Sanae were convinced Yurika was a cosplayer with an active imagination.
Even after admitting the existence of the paranormal phenomenon that was Sanae, magic and magical girls were in a completely different league.
There was a limit to the amount one could believe.
“Excuse me, please open the door! Please listen to what I have to say! And why did you throw me outside anyways!?”
A vigorous protest could be heard from the other side of the door, along with an intense barrage of knocking.
Yurika did not leave as Koutarou and Sanae had hoped.
“Keep it down, cosplay woman! If you want to hold a cosplay party, do it elsewhere!”

“You heard him! It’s because of people like you who don’t consider their surroundings and bother people around them that the reputation of all cosplayers is ruined! How about you think about your actions instead!”
Hearing that Yurika knocked once more very weakly and quieted down. Instead they began hearing her sobbing.
“Uuu… Auuuu, yo-you don’t have to say it like that! You wanted me to say it and you said you’d believe me, so I told you even though I didn’t want to! Please believe me!”
“Who would believe you when you’re running around with that kind of outfit, talking about magic!”

“I-I’m well aware of that! I don’t want to either! When I transform into this outfit, all the men stare at me! It doesn’t fully hide my chest or butt either!”
And instead of a knock a scratch could be heard.
“But, the magical land told me to wear this and act boldly or I’ll be poorly received by the citizens, so I have no choice!”
The whimpering voice gradually grew louder.
“I already know! That I’m not suited for this job and that no one will believe me! I’m not crazy! Fueeeeeeeeeeee!”
Her whimpering had now become a loud bawling.
“Uwaaaaaaaa! This is too cruel! Uwaaaaaaa! Open the door! It’s not fair! Please believe me! Fueeeeeeeeeeee!”
Even though there was a closed door between them, her crying could be heard as though she was right next to them.
“Haa…”
And Koutarou, having finally had it, put his hand on the doorknob.
“Koutarou, do you really believe that idiot’s story?”
“It doesn’t matter if I believe her or not. At this rate, it’ll bother the neighbors.”
If Koutarou could hear her voice this clearly, all the other rooms probably could as well. Besides, it was already midnight. If this kept up, he would be thrown out.
“I don’t have any part in this.”
“It can’t be helped…”
And Koutarou sighed once more as he opened the door.
“I-I’m not lying, I really am a magical girl!”
“I understand, okay? So please stop crying.”
“That’s right, Yurika. Your belief is splendid; not a lot of people can stick with it like you.”
Even inside the room Yurika would not stop crying.
Koutarou and Sanae tried to calm her down, but it did not go very well.
“Do-Does that mean you believe me? That this place is in danger? And that magic is real?”
“Th-that’s a bit…”
“I knew you didn’t believe me! You’re all talk! Fueeeeeeee! You think I’m just some pervert!”
“You idiot, Sanae! At times like this, say you believe her, even if it’s a lie!”

“That’s because she’s talking about magic! No matter how many abnormalities you add up magic is just impossible!”
“Uaaaaaa! You really don’t believe me! You’re just trying to trick me!”
“Look what you did because of your unneeded remark!”
“It’s not just my fault!”
In the middle of room Yurika was bawling her eyes out. Koutarou and Sanae were flustered, and the situation was getting worse by the minute.
“Here, Yurika, wipe your tears with this. Okay?”

Sanae used her Poltergeist to send a nearby towel floating up to the sobbing Yurika.
Seeing the towel float towards her, Yurika suddenly stopped crying and opened her eyes wide.
“Ma-magic!? You can use it too!?”
“Eh? Me?”
“Yes! This is magic, isn’t it!? Why won’t you believe me when you can use it too!?”
Yurika’s face regained all of its luster in an instant. She was happy to have found another magic user.
“Ah, this? This isn’t magic.”
However, Sanae clearly denied it.
“It’s not… magic?”
Yurika made a surprised face and blinked repeatedly, then tears began forming again.
“This is just a paranormal phenomenon.”
“Paranormal… phenomenon?
“Yeah. I’m a ghost after all. Look”
Sanae stretched out the towel mid-air and flew through it.
“Eeeeeeee!?”
This left Yurika speechless.
“Are you really a g-g-ghost?”
“Yeah, as you can see. Here’s your towel.”
Sanae landed with her back to Yurika and handed her the towel.
The towel flew through her body and floated in front of Yurika.
“…”
“What?”
Sanae stared at Yurika, who had her eyes wide open, and stopped moving.
“A-Aaa, auuu…”
Yurika blinked twice.
“Are you okay?”
And as the worried Koutarou started approaching Yurika, she began to move.
“Kyaaaaaaaaaa! Noooooooooooo! G-ghost! Not a ghost!!”
Yurika suddenly sprung to her feet, picked up her broom, and surveyed the room. She then ran for the wardrobe.
“Wh-What!?”
“H-Hey, what’s wrong?”
“Don’t possess me please! I beg you! I’m scared of ghosts! If you’re going to possess someone, possess him!”
Yurika jumped into the wardrobe and closed the sliding door in a hurry.
“Don’t come near me! Don’t possess me! Nothing good will come from killing me! Please suck the life out that energetic person over there instead, please!”
Pitiful pleas could be heard through the wardrobe door.
“What’s up with that?”
“Wh-who knows… But she’s probably scared of you.”

Koutarou and Sanae, who had been left behind, stared at the wardrobe, dumbfounded.
“Ri-right. Normally when a person comes across a ghost they act like that. After spending some time with you I completely forgot.”
“Were all the previous tenants like that too?”
“Yeah, something like that.”
Sanae looked at Koutarou and nodded.
“But is it even okay for a magical girl of love and courage to run away like that? She even left you behind to take her place as the victim.”
“Well, she’s just a cosplayer. Even if she wanted to act like a real one, she couldn’t”
“You have a point.”
The pair kept giving the wardrobe frigid glances.
“I’m sorry! I’m so sorry! You don’t have to believe in magic anymore! Just please don’t possess me!”
Unaware of Koutarou and Sanae’s feelings, Yurika desperately pleaded for her life.
“So what do we do about that?”
“What’s there to do? We’ll just have to get her to come out.”
“…Yeah.”
Koutarou and Sanae looked at each other again and sighed heavily.

Commence Invasion ♥

Tuesday, April 7th, 7:30 AM.
"...In the end, she didn't come out at all..."
"If you leave her here with me, she definitely won't come out."
Koutarou stopped with his shoe in hand and turned towards the inner room.
Yurika had not come out of the wardrobe ever since she had jumped in.
The frightened, sulking Yurika had refused to come out no matter how many times they tried to persuade her.
And Koutarou was about to put things there on hold and head for school.
"She'll come out when she gets hungry."
"I hope so. But at this rate, we're not going to get anywhere..."
"You're right about that..."
Koutarou finished putting on his shoes and forced a smile as he stood up.
"Hurry up and come back, okay?"
"Yeah. I don't have any work today, so I'll be home earlier than yesterday."
"Yeah, come back safely."
I'm being seen off...
"Yeah, I'll see you later."
And saying good bye...
The two who had been fighting over the room exchanged those words. Oddly enough, it did not feel unnatural.

As Koutarou stepped out he spotted Kenji, who was leaving his bike in the bike racks in front of the apartments.
"Hey, Mackenzie."
"Morning, Kou."
Having finished locking the bike, Kenji approached Koutarou, who was in the middle of yawning.
"Fuaaaaaaaaa..."
"What, sleep-deprived again?"
"Something like that. It was hard to sleep..."
"That ghost?"
"That's part of it."
Koutarou felt a sudden tremor.
"Eh?"
At first Koutarou thought it was because he was moving, but he kept shaking even when he had stopped.
"What's wrong?"
"Isn't it shaking?"
"Hm? Yeah, now that you mention it, it is shaking a bit."
"An earthquake?"
"Probably. I doubt there's any construction going on at this time, after all."

The two looked down at the ground, and after a few seconds the shaking ceased.
“It looks like it’s stopped.”
“Well, that’s about it I guess.”
As they were talking Shizuka’s voice could be heard from above.
“Good morning, Satomi-kun, Mackenzie-kun!”
Koutarou and Kenji looked up at Shizuka, who was on the second floor passage in the middle of locking her door.
“Good morning, Landlord-san!”
“Good morning, Kasagi-san.”
“The weather’s very nice today.”
Shizuka walked down the stairs of the second floor.
“Did I keep you waiting?”
“I didn’t wait at all, Landlord-san.”
“I only just arrived as well.”
Today was the day lessons began at Kitsushouharukaze High School.
Fortunately, the three happened to be assigned to the same class, and so they had decided to go to school together.
“Oh, good. Let’s go then, shall we?”
“Yes!”
“Got it. But Kou, you sure are strangely polite to Kasagi-san.”
“You’re right, Mackenzie-kun. Even though I’m calling him Satomi-kun, he’s being formal and calling me landlord-san.”
“It’s only normal to hold your landlord in high regard.”
“He’s been raised to value hard work, so he’s always like this towards those he works with.”
“I see… ufufufu.”
The three walked together to school.

It was the second day of school counting the entrance ceremony, and the classroom was quiet.
There were a few groups talking, but it was mostly groups of students who had gone to the same middle school.
It would probably take a few more days for the students to get used to one another.
“Satomi-kun!”
In the quiet classroom Shizuka’s voice could be clearly heard.
She was carrying a cardboard box and moving towards Koutarou and Kenji’s seats.
“What is it, Landlord-san?”
“Fufufu, please don’t call be Landlord-san at school, Satomi-kun. Oh right, here you go.”
“What’s this?”
Koutarou received a small cardboard box from Shizuka.
“I spoke to a classmate of mine from middle school who knows a lot about these kinds of things, and after I explained the circumstances to her she gave me all this.”

When Koutarou opened the box he saw a lot of notes, labels, ropes and decorated sticks inside.
“Religious equipment…”
Kenji, whose seat was right in front of Koutarou and who was also peeking into the box, stated the contents of the box before Shizuka.
“Religious equipment?”
Koutarou, who didn’t understand, asked Kenji.
“Yeah, look at this. It has ‘begone evil spirits’ written on it.”
“You’re right.”
“But to think there’s equipment from so many different religions gathered here. Shinto, Buddhist, Christian, Islamic… Wow, even Voodoo.”
“Why would you give this to me, Landlord-san?”
“That’s because you said a ghost appeared in your room. I thought this might help.”
“Ah…”
Koutarou finally remembered that he was fighting against Sanae over the room.
That’s right, I’m fighting her over ownership of the room.
With Yurika showing up the day before, there was no time for any of that.
“Wouldn’t all of this cost quite a bit, Kasagi-san?”
“Oh, about that, Mackenzie-kun. These were about to expire so I got them for free.”
“Expire!? Religious equipment!?”
Hearing those unexpected words from Shizuka’s mouth left Kenji amazed.
“That’s what she said. She also said the expiration date was really really close, so use them as soon as possible.”
“…To think the wave of civilization would affect even these kinds of things.”
Kenji picked up a small, dried up, suspicious looking charm, and stared at the label attached to it.
‘Expiration date: six months from manufacturing. For date of manufacture, please consult the packaging.’
“The world is coming to an end…”
That was Kenji’s honest opinion.
“This’ll help a lot, Landlord-san.”
“I hope it’ll be useful.”
“I’ll make it useful!”
“Do your best, Kou; I’m cheering for you!”
“Then help me out!”
“No way. You know I’m bad with those kinds of things.”
“Now that you mention it…”
Kenji hated all things occult.
Even though he was more knowledgeable, he feared them more than Koutarou.
If you asked him, he’d say he hated it because he knew about it.
“Alright, with this…”
Koutarou stopped mid-sentence, remembering that he had one other he had to drive out of his room.

Self-proclaimed Princess of Love and Courage: Magical Girl Rainbow Yurika.
She was an embarrassing girl with an excessive cosplay hobby.
“Hey, Mackenzie.”
“I won’t help, no matter how many times you ask!”
“Not that. There’s something I want to ask.”
“Hmm? What?”
Kenji nodded and turned to Koutarou, who indicated the cardboard box.
“Ghosts can be exorcised with these kinds of things, right?”
“Well, yeah.”
“So, what do you use to exorcise cosplayers?”
Koutarou looked at him seriously.
“Are you stupid? There’s no such thing!”
“Don’t say that, I’m serious here.”
Yesterday he’d only had to deal with a ghost, but today he also had to deal with a cosplayer.
Koutarou was serious.
“Seriously, cosplayers are just normal people. Don’t be stupid.”
“So I can just use force?”
“Do whatever you want!”
Kenji adjusted his glasses with an annoyed expression.
“Hmm…”
And as Koutarou crossed his arms to think, Shizuka, who had been watching the two, started laughing.
“Fufufu, you two sure get along well.”
“Only because we’ve known each other for so long…”
“Don’t make it sound so unpleasant, Mackenzie!”
“Fufu. You don’t really hate it. Right, Mackenzie-kun?”
“I really do!”
“You’re not honest, are you, Mackenzie-kun.”
“Landlord-san, he’s always trying to act tough.”
“Kou! Are you picking a fight with me!?”
“Ahahahaha!”
Shizuka’s laughter filled the classroom, but even hearing her exuberant voice, Koutarou was thinking about something completely different.
Do I really want to drive Sanae away?
For Koutarou, that was a sudden and unexpected doubt.

After school, having finished clean-up duty, Koutarou headed for the club building.
There were all kinds of clubs and societies in each of the rooms.
In fact, you could call it an apartment building for clubs.
“Well, it’s technically treated as a society so…”

Koutarou headed for the south wing of the second floor, where the societies had been gathered.
Sports clubs were gathered around the entrances, but further inside the building there were almost no students to be found.
In the quiet hallway only Koutarou's footsteps could be heard.
"Here it is."
Koutarou stopped in front of the farthest back room.
The Knitting Society.
That was the society he had joined on announcement day.

"Hello?"
Koutarou knocked on the door.
Because the door was made of resin and had an aluminium frame, the sound of the knock carried down the entire hallway.
".. Ye-Yes!"
A slightly panicked voice answered.
Shortly after, the door was unlocked, and a girl's face popped out.
"Who is – ah..."
The girl made a suspicious face at first, but after noticing it was Koutarou she eased up.
"Hello, Senpai."
"Welcome, Satomi-kun."
The girl was Sakuraba Harumi, the club president, and the only member apart from Koutarou.

To Koutarou, who was a complete beginner, even the basics of knitting were hard to grasp.
To explain it, you spin the wool on your finger around the knitting needle, and on top of the needle you make loose knots.
Although it is easy once one becomes used to it, Koutarou was clumsy and had a bad memory, making it rather troublesome.
"Senpai, what do I do here?"
"You pull to the right and then loop it around here."
"Oh, that's right. Now I remember..."
Koutarou would sometimes stop to look at Harumi before continuing on.
And although he was somewhat careless and almost stabbed his fingers on the needle, Koutarou was thoroughly knitting.
"There's no need to rush, Satomi-kun. I won't mind if you do it slowly; today is just practice."
"Ye-yes. I'm sorry, I'm clumsy."
"I don't mind. Everyone is like that when they first start."
Harumi seemed happy as she watched over Koutarou.
Normally she was shy and withdrawn, but right now she was upbeat and talkative, probably because she was doing what she loved.
"Was it the same for you too, Senpai?"

“Yes. I’ve even stabbed my fingers with a knitting needle before.”
Harumi fondly remembered her past. Even so, Koutarou was not looking at her face at the time. If he had been, he would not have been able to forget the smile on her face for the rest of the day.
“Do this like this and… Haha, I feel more motivated after hearing that even senpai has failed before.”
“When you put it like that it sounds like you’re teasing me. Fufufu, but you still haven’t stabbed your finger yet, so you might be better than I was.”
“Ahaha, I’ll try.”
Even while laughing Koutarou diligently kept moving the knitting needle, not looking away from his hands.
It sure is unexpected… That someone like Satomi-kun would work this hard…
Harumi, who was seated next to Koutarou, couldn’t help but find it mysterious.
While she herself enjoyed knitting, she was also aware that not everyone else did.
She did not expect an athletic type like Koutarou to show any interest in this kind of thing.
She had at one point even wondered if he had some kind of ulterior motive, like the boy from announcement day.
“Senpai, when I pull the knots is it alright if I put some force into it?”
“Ah, yes, that’s okay. But it’ll turn out poorly if you pull too much and the sides become unbalanced, so be careful.”
“Oh, I see. Got it.”
“Good.”
Why does he work so hard…?
In reality, however, that was not the case. Koutarou was earnestly working away and trying to seriously learn knitting.
Harumi couldn’t help but find that mysterious.
“Satomi-kun…”
“Yes, what is it?”
Hearing Harumi’s tone, Koutarou stopped moving his knitting needles and looked up.
Being confronted by Koutarou’s gaze, Harumi’s normal shy and withdrawn personality returned ever so slightly.
“Do you mind if I ask you something?”
“That’s fine, ask me anything.”
“I-in that case…”
Having made up her mind, Harumi swallowed her saliva and pitched her question to Koutarou.
“Satomi-kun, what made you want to pick up knitting?”
“Pick up knitting?”
Koutarou laughed self-consciously and put his hand to his head.
“It doesn’t fit me at all, does it? Ahahaha…”
Koutarou was aware of how he must look to others.
“Th-that’s not what I meant! I just meant that, well, wouldn’t a guy get bored doing this?… And that made me wonder…”

Hearing Koutarou's laughing voice, Harumi's face turned red and she turned her gaze downward.
Looking at her, Koutarou decided to tell her about his circumstances.
He felt that she would understand, and since she was his teacher he felt it was only fair she should know.
"You don't seem like the gossiping type, so I'll tell you."
"Satomi-kun?..."
Harumi looked back up at Koutarou, and she was slightly surprised that his face was more serious than she had expected.
"Actually, there's a half-knit sweater in my room..."
"Sweater... Ah..."
Harumi remembered Koutarou's words from the first time she had met him.
"Would it be possible for a complete amateur to knit a sweater?"
"I hope to complete it with my own hands eventually. Hahaha, who knows how long it'll take before I'll be able to do it though..."
That sweater must hold some memories of someone special to him.
That is what Harumi thought as she looked at Koutarou's smile. His slightly embarrassed, laughing expression was oddly gentle.
So that's why he's working so hard... He must think that completing the sweater... I see, so that's how it is...
Filled with relief, Harumi felt joy from the bottom of her heart.
"I understand, Satomi-kun. I'll make sure that you'll be able to complete that sweater!"
"Really!?"
"Yes!"
Harumi was truly happy that Koutarou was taking knitting seriously and that she had been able to find a true companion.
"Let's work together, Satomi-kun!"
"Yes!"
Koutarou being unskilled was not a problem at all. Harumi didn't think anything of it.
But I wonder who knitted that sweater...
Harumi asked herself, but the question quickly left her mind.
That doesn't matter! Let's get along, Satomi-kun!
Harumi was satisfied having found a true companion. It was a truly joyful event for her.
"I do this here, and..."
Koutarou reviewed what he had learned that day while walking to Corona House.
The sight of a boy moving his hands in a suspicious way in a town painted by the sunset was surreal.
Even so, Koutarou was serious.
He moved his empty hands and continued his image training.
"Hmm?"
As Koutarou returned to Corona House he could hear a sound from the garden.
"I wonder what that is."

As Koutarou rounded the concrete wall, he saw Shizuka, who was wearing an apron over her school uniform and holding a large bamboo broom.
She was in the middle of cleaning up the garden.
“Welcome back, Satomi-kun.”
“I’m back, Landlord-san.”
Shizuka welcomed him with a smile.
“I was cleaning the garden.”
“I see.”
There was a small pile of uprooted weeds at her feet. After pulling up the weeds, she gathered them up with her broom.
“I want to keep this as beautiful as possible.”
Shizuka smiled and narrowed her eyes as she looked up at Corona House, dyed by the sunset.
Corona House was beautiful.
Although the design was old fashioned, the 25 year old building showed no signs of its age.
This was because Shizuka had never neglected maintaining it.
“Landlord-san, you said this house was left behind by your parents.”
Koutarou also looked up at Corona House.
“Yes, that’s right. That’s why I want to keep it standing as long as possible, although in the end it will probably be demolished.”
“I’ll make sure to live with care.”
Koutarou understood Shizuka’s feelings.
They were the same kinds of feelings that Koutarou had towards completing the sweater.
“Thank you, Satomi-kun.”
“Well, I have to act cool from time to time.”
“It would have been a moving scene too, if only you hadn’t said that. Ahaha.”
“Wahahahaha!”
And as the two laughed, a small, blue light flew across the crimson sky.
“Ah, a shooting star.”
“So it is.”
The shooting star flew close by Corona House and had entered the view of the pair.
“...I wish that Satomi-kun won’t lose to the ghost.”
Shizuka puts her hands together and made a wish.
The star vanished at the same time she finished wishing.
“I won’t lose to a ghost. Besides I got a bunch of religious equipment from you.”
“Just in case, Satomi-kun. Ufufu.”
“I’m not being trusted at all...”
“I trust you.”
“You’re just feigning it!”
“Ara ara. Ahahaha.”
“Wahahahaha!”

The pair talked happily, but the only reason they were able to remain so cheerful was because they were unaware of what was about to happen.

Standing in front of Room 106, Koutarou reached into his pocket and took out his key. He could hear voices coming from inside.
“Noooooooooo! Please don’t come any closer!!”
“Fuefuefue, what does it matter, what does it matter?”
“I hate ghosts!!”
“What’s the matter, magical girl Rainbow Yurika?”
What he could hear were the voices of a frightened Yurika and a playful Sanae.
“…What are they doing?”
Koutarou unlocked the door, put the key back into his pocket, and opened the door.
“Sa-save meeeeeee!”
“Oo!?
At that moment, Yurika jumped out of the room into the hallway and began trembling as she hid behind Koutarou’s back.
“Gh-ghost-san, i-if you’re going to possess someone, po-possess this person!”
“Come on now, for someone who introduces herself as a magical girl of love and courage…”
Koutarou was awestruck.
Well it’s only natural; she’s just a cosplayer after all.
As Koutarou was thinking this, the other person in the room came to the front door.
“Welcome home.”
“Thanks, I’m back.”
Koutarou responded to Sanae’s welcome, took off his shoes, and entered the room. The trembling Yurika followed him in.
“Sanae, don’t bully her too much. She’s not related to all this.”
“I am related!”
“I know she’s not directly related, but if she starts up a cosplay party here, I won’t stand for it.”
“I’m not here to host that kind of party! The evil magical girls are… The enemies are approaching!”
“…It seems the party is just moments away.”
“Right?”
“Please listen to what I have to say! Please!”
“Fine, fine.”
“We know, we know. Danger is approaching, right?”
“It must be nice for someone who’s only playing…”
“That’s true…”
“Aaaaaaaa, you’re not listening at all!”
As he entered the inner room, Koutarou threw his bag into a corner and turned to Sanae.
“Sanae, let’s leave this girl be for now.”
“Yeah, I got it.”

“Don’t leave me be, please! This is important!”
“For the time being, let’s settle this between you and me.”
“Yeah…”
Suddenly the smiling Sanae’s expression darkened.
“… That’s right, I had to drive you out of this room, didn’t I.”
“I can’t afford to leave, so I need to exorcise you.”
“That’s right, that’s what this was about.”
That had been the intention of those two up until yesterday. However, those feelings had gradually diminished.
“Please listen to what I have to say!”
“Could you quiet down? There’s no time for playing!”
“Sorry, I’ll play with you later.”
“Noooooo, I don’t want to play with a ghost!”
“…Do you want me to listen or not? Make up your mind!”
“Hey, Koutarou…”
Sanae spoke to him in a quiet voice. Up to that point, her voice had always been loud and energetic, so this attracted his attention.
“Hmm?”
“…Do you hate me?”
“Eh?”
“If by any chance you – ”

What interrupted Sanae was a large sound.
“Kyaaaaaaa!?”
Yurika screamed, and at the same time the tatami mat next to the entrance of the inner room was sent flying.
Yurika, who had been standing on that mat at the time, crashed face-first into the ground.
“Why is it always me!?”
Yurika rolled, smashed into the wall, and stopped moving.
“Gyafu.”
“What!? What just happened!?”
“Koutarou, below the tatami mat! Someone’s coming out!”
“What!?”
Koutarou, who had been following the flying tatami mat, looked back and saw a person coming up from where the mat had been.
There was a round hole in the floorboards, just large enough for a person to pass through.
“It is a pleasure to meet you for the first time. My apologies for the surprise.”
Coming up from beneath the ground was a lone girl. She appeared to be slightly older than Koutarou. She was tall, with a proper, formal appearance and distinct eyes, creating a composed atmosphere around her.

“My name is Kiriha. A descendant of the people of the earth, born to the Kurano family, who presides over oracles and incantations.”
However, her clothes were strange.
She was wearing rare old-fashioned clothing with lots of adornments.
It was almost like something out of a history book, resembling the outfit of an ancient Japanese shrine maiden.
“Kiriha?”
“What’s up with this one…!?”
With this, four people had gathered in the small room. Koutarou, Sanae, Yurika and Kiriha.
Why do people keep flocking to this room…?
Koutarou was less concerned with the appearance of Kiriha, and more concerned with the increasing population of his room.

Koutarou, Sanae and Kiriha were sitting at the tea table in the middle of the room.
Yurika was still lying next to the wall by the window, unconscious and unmoving.
“Allow me to reintroduce myself. My name is Kurano Kiriha. As Kurano is the name of my clan, I’d prefer if you called me Kiriha.”
“I’m Satomi Koutarou.”
“I’m Sanae.”
“Koutarou and Sanae. Though it be merely until we’re done with my business, I hope we’ll be able to get along.”
Hearing their names, Kiriha politely bowed.
“How polite.”
“Le-let’s get along.”
Koutarou and Sanae returned the bow.
“Firstly, I’d like to apologize. I’m sorry for coming out of a place like that. It was the result of not wanting to cause a lot of commotion.”
“Please raise your head, Kiriha-san.”
Koutarou was gracious in kind to Kiriha, who kept bowing her head politely.
“We wish to express our gratitude for your generosity. Thank you, Koutarou.”
Kiriha raised her head with a smile on her lips. Her sincere demeanor and amiable posture dispelled Koutarou’s wariness.
Her clothes are strange and her tone is stiff, but it seems like she can at least hold a proper conversation.
The encounters with Yurika yesterday and Sanae the day before had been disasters, but Kiriha’s appearance left Koutarou with a good impression.
“Well, Kiriha-san, what kind of business do you have here? And why did you come from below – ”
“Hey, Koutarou!”
“Uwa! Wh-what is it, Sanae?”
Sanae’s sullen face cut in between the two, interrupting Koutarou mid-sentence.

“Your attitude is completely different from when you met me and Yurika!”
“Of course it is. The other party’s attitude is different, after all.”
“…Aha~ I can see right through you~”
“Wh-what’s with that look?”
“It’s because of those big breasts, isn’t it!? You pervert!”
“Eh? Are Kiriha-san’s breasts big!?”
“If you didn’t notice, you don’t have to looook!”
An English-Japanese dictionary sent flying by Sanae’s Poltergeist struck Koutarou’s head.
“…Do-don’t be unreasonable!”
“This is usually how we act!”
“Then don’t get angry when you’re left out of the conversation!”
“Grrr… I still feel like something’s unfair! Hmph, I don’t care anyway!”
As if she had been talked down to by Koutarou, Sanae looked away sullenly.
“…Is it okay if I continue?”
Kiriha, who had been watching the pair in amazement, cleared her throat with a soft cough and straightened her posture.
“I’m sorry, Kiriha-san.”
“Not at all. I’m the one being unreasonable, appearing at such a strange time from such a strange place. There’s no need to worry.”
“I appreciate you saying that. Kiriha-san, I’ll ask you again: what reason do you have for coming here? And why did you come from under the floor?”
“For me to explain that, I’ll need to start by explaining who I am.”
Kiriha gazed directly at Koutarou and began to speak boldly.
“I’m of the people of the earth, and as you might guess from the name, we live in this planet.”
“Ha… But doesn’t everyone?”
Koutarou didn’t understand what Kiriha was talking about and replied with a perplexed expression on his face.
People normally lived in the planet after all.
“That’s not what I meant. We don’t live on this planet, but literally inside of it.”
“Eh!? Which means your people live under the earth?”

“That’s right. To make it easy for us you could call us the underground people. We live completely self-sufficiently underground.”
“You don’t mean…”
“Un-underground people!?”
It wasn’t just Koutarou, but Sanae, who had been looking away, who stared at Kiriha in surprise.
“What would someone like that want with us!?”
Sanae slammed her hands down on the tea table and leaned in towards Kiriha.
“Calm down, Sanae. I haven’t put the luggage in order so it’s very cramped. Don’t move around too much.”

“Ah, So-sorry…”
Being reprimanded by Koutarou, Sanae sat down in her original place.
“Our purpose for coming here is not you or even this building.”
“What does that mean?”
“Our tribe originally lived in the mountains of this region. However, when your ancestors started using metal in large quantities and began mining into our mountain, we were forced to live underground.”
“And that’s how you became underground people?”
“That would be the result of it, yes. Having gone underground, our tribe had originally planned on returning to the surface shortly thereafter. However, they unexpectedly found the underground comfortable. About half the tribe stayed underground. Those people would be my ancestors.”
“Heeh…”
Having come from underground, Kiriha’s words were very convincing.
The hole left in the floor seemed to lead downwards into the very depths of the earth.
“And recently, we made a historic discovery.”
“A historic discovery? What?”
“A single book was discovered by chance. In it, the position of the altar where our ancestors’ souls are enshrined was recorded. We have been seeking it for countless years.”
“So, you surfaced to look for the altar?”
In response to Koutarou’s question, Kiriha nodded.
“That’s right. However, the position of the altar was accurately recorded, so there’s no reason to look for it.”
“So your business is almost done already.”
“Good for you, Kiriha-san.”
“It’s not all that easy.”
Kiriha sadly lowered her eyebrows and shook her head.
“We would love nothing more than to rebuild our altar. However, there’s a problem with the place.”
“The place…?”
“I have a bad feeling about this…”
Sanae made an unpleasant expression.
“Actually, our altar’s position would be the middle of this room.”
Hearing Kiriha’s words, they were just as Sanae had feared.
“Which means, Kiriha-san…”
“Yes, Koutarou. Could you please relinquish this room to us? It’s important for the altar to be in this exact position.”
“I knew it!”
Sanae stood up in a hurry.
“Of course we won’t give to you! I won’t let you build some strange altar here!”
Sanae refused to let somebody just build an altar in her home.

“We won’t forcibly evict you. Our tribe has its pride and traditions. We won’t force our matters onto you. In return, we would like to offer you the necessary compensation to find an abode elsewhere. Karama, Korama, please bring that.”
“Got it-ho[1]!”
“Understood-ho, Ane-san!”
Two small shadows appeared from the hole.
“Wh-what’s that!?”
“Ha-haniwa[2]?”
“Ho~”
“Hoho~”
They were two haniwa about 30 centimeters long. With smooth surfaces and adorable faces, the two were combining forces to carry a golden glowing lump of metal.
“Hey!”
“Ho~”
“Hey!”
“Ho~”
The two were letting out strange voices as they carried the lump of metal towards the stunned Koutarou and Sanae.
“Soooo cuuuteee!”
“Wh-what are they!?”
“There is no need to be surprised. These two are my servants. They are similar to the machine dolls your people use.”
“Ho-! I’m Karama-ho!”
“Hello-ho! I’m Korama!”
Putting down the metal lump in front of Koutarou, the two waved cheerfully.
“To think these are robots…”
“Hello, Karama-chan, Korama-chan!”
Koutarou and Sanae were shocked.
If Kiriha’s words we’re to be trusted, these two were robots.
However, nothing about them seemed mechanical.
Even though their bodies looked like pottery, their limbs moved freely.
In contrast to their lovely appearance, they must have been made using highly advanced techniques.
Sanae had her heart stolen by the cute robots.
“If Mackenzie saw this he might cry out in joy.”
“Koutarou, Sanae. That lump of metal is solid gold. However, in the process of casting it, some platinum was mixed in, though I doubt that will lower its value. If you vacate this room, we will offer you this in return.”
“Th-this is a remarkable amount, Kiriha-san!”

1 The haniwa‘s -ho thing is just a verbal tic, kinda like Naruto‘s -ttebayo or -de gozaru.
2 A clay figure that was used during rituals and buried with the dead. It is theorized that the soul would reside inside of it.

When told the metal in front of him was gold, Koutarou was shocked once again.
Gold is worth a few thousand yen per gram, and there must have been at least 10 kilos of it.
Which meant that that gold would be worth several tens of millions of yen.
It was an abnormal amount of gold just for clearing out of the apartment.
“This is just to prove how serious we are. If this causes you any inconvenience, we can exchange it to Japanese yen. How about it? Would you be willing to relinquish this room to us?”
“So much gold… What am I doing!? No way! There’s just no way! This is my home after all! Koutarou, you say something too!”
“Hmmm…”
Sanae flat out refused, but on the other hand, Koutarou had his arms crossed and was deep in thought.
“Hey! What are you thinking for!?”
“Well, hearing her circumstances, I think it might not be wrong to cooperate with her.”
“Koutarou!? Are you sure!?”
Hearing Koutarou’s response, Kiriha’s expression lit up and she stood.
The adornments attached to her clothes made piercing jangling noises.
Like the metal lump, it seemed like they were made from gold.
“Not just her breasts, but you’ve lost sight of yourself over money as well!?”
“You’re wrong! I can’t accept this amount!.. Well, if I move, I’ll need some amount of money, since if I couldn’t survive after moving it would be pointless.”
“That is well within your rights.”
“When I told you to get out you refused! Why are you listening to this big-breasted woman! Are big breasts that great!?”
“Don’t treat me like some pervert! It’s just that I’m fine with cooperating with her because her motive and attitude are reasonable!”
“What’s up with that!?”
At this point Koutarou felt that it might be okay to cooperate with Kiriha.
She was very polite, and had explained her reasons clearly.
She had also said she would prepare necessary compensation for moving.
And her reasons for wanting the room were completely sound.
Rebuilding an altar to worship their ancestors, which was similar to building a grave or a Buddhist altar.
Koutarou had no reason to refuse someone who only wished to honor their ancestors.

“Sanae, you probably want to stay in this room, but can’t you compromise somehow? Even if you remain here, an altar wouldn’t be an inconvenience, would it?”
“Th-that’s… Well, it wouldn’t be inconvenience, but…”
Sanae peeked at Kiriha’s face.
Sanae had no reason to hate her, other than her big breasts.
Therefore, Sanae’s feelings began gradually changing due to Koutarou’s persuasion.

“So forgive her, will you? Unlike Yurika, it’s not like she wants to hold a cosplay party”
“I got it… I’ll hold it in.”
And Sanae finally gave in.
“Oh! So you’ll agree! Koutarou, Sanae!”
Kiriha’s expression brightened further.
“Yes.”
“I don’t really like it, but I have no choice. Circumstances can’t be changed.”
Sanae was going to coexist with the altar.
“Thank you, both of you! With this, we’ll be able to move onto Phase Two right away!”
“Phase Two?”
“What’s that?”
Koutarou and Sanae both tilted their heads in confusion after hearing Kiriha’s words.
“The surface invasion operation. Once we activate the altar, we’ll be able to gather large amounts of spiritual energy! And with that, we’ll be able to mass produce spiritual weapons like Karama and Korama!”
“WH-WHAAAT!?”
“A SURFACE INVASION!?”
“Of course. There is no need to worry; you two benefactors will be treated as guests. There is absolutely nothing to worry about.”
Kiriha had interpreted Koutarou and Sanae’s surprise as worry over what would happen to them. Of course, that was not the actual reason behind their surprise.
“Wa-wait just a moment! So what!? You want to rebuild the altar where your ancestors have been enshrined to so you can invade the surface!?”
“That’s right… What’s wrong all of a sudden, Koutarou?”
Surprised by Koutarou’s unexpected reaction, Kiriha looked at him in amazement and blinked.
“No ‘whats’ or ‘whys’! I take it all back! I’ll never hand the room over to you!”
“Well said, Koutarou!”
“Koutarou!? What now all of a sudden? You were being so cooperative just a moment ago!”
“I flat out refuse! I can’t shoulder the responsibility of letting a surface invasion happen!”
Looking at Karama and Korama, even Koutarou, who was a novice at science could understand.
Making something like that required highly advanced techniques.
If those kinds of people invaded the surface, who knew what they could do.
He didn’t even want to imagine it.

“I thought you were at least reasonable! But to think you would just casually say something so ridiculous!”
“…I see. For you to resist that much… Well, I have another plan.”
“What!? Are you gonna use force!?”
“Well, who knows…”

Kiriha did not so much as flinch as Koutarou showed his enraged face before her. Instead, her lips formed a suspicious smile.
“Koutarou, the red bottle in the seasoning box is the salt, right?”
“Yeah…”
“So it was this after all…”
Koutarou was cutting up cabbage for dinner.
Next to him was Kiriha wearing an apron.
She was dexterously stirring the frying-pan while shaking the salt inside the small red bottle.
“Koutarou, would you prefer it to be heavily salted or just lightly?”
“…I would prefer it heavily.”
“Heavily salted things are bad for your health. Let’s start gradually decreasing the amount starting tomorrow. You’re living on your own, so you need to take care of yourself.”

Kiriha gently smiled while she continued to stir the frying-pan.
She was in the middle of stir-frying vegetables.
The cabbage Koutarou was cutting up was soon going to be added as well.
Moreover, the rice cooker was occupied in the inner room.
Kiriha had washed the rice a little while ago.
Koutarou’s dinner for today consisted of rice, some meat, and stir-fried vegetables.
“Koutarou, are you done with the cabbage?”
“Ye-yeah.”
“In that case, please add it in.”
Kiriha lowered the flames and beckoned Koutarou.
“I didn’t think you could cook, Koutarou.”
“My old man couldn’t do anything on his own, so…”
Koutarou threw the cabbage into the frying pan, and as the remaining moisture of the cabbage mixed with the oil it made a loud sizzling noise. Hearing that, Koutarou began feeling nostalgic.
How long has it been since I last stood next to someone in the kitchen?…
What had crossed Koutarou’s mind was a memory of him standing next to his mother in the kitchen.
She would always have a gentle smile on her face, just like Kiriha.
“Koutarou, next time you cut up the cabbage, make sure you cut it thinner. It’ll be hard for you to eat it like this”
“…Yeah.”
With the image of his smiling mother in his head, Kiriha’s smile proved to be very effective, and Koutarou obediently nodded his head.
“Koutarou, prepare the plate. It’ll be done soon.”
“Yeah.”
Koutarou nodded once more and reached towards the shelf.
The sound of the frying-pan and tableware being placed filled the room.
The sounds continued for a while longer before Kiriha stopped the flames.

And she then casually called out to Koutarou while smiling.

“Koutarou, is the plate ready?”

“It’s ready.”

“Is the rice boiled?”

“In another two minutes.”

“I see. Koutarou, will you relinquish this room?”

“I wi - ”

Due the natural and casual way Kiriha asked him, Koutarou almost nodded and agreed instinctively.

“Of course I won’t!”

“I see. That is regrettable.”

She mentioned it casually, as if it was a completely normal conversation.

She had skillfully and casually mentioned it with opportune timing, and Koutarou had been close to agreeing several times.

“I won’t fall for those kind of tricks!”

“You’re quite a tough opponent, Koutarou.”

Although Kiriha had failed several times, she didn’t seem to mind.

“Fufufu, it seems this will become a long war.”

“What are you trying to do?”

Koutarou was perplexed by her attacks.

Unlike Sanae, who was simply being unreasonable, or Yurika, who kept repeating her incomprehensible reasons, Kiriha’s battle plan, trying to get into Koutarou’s mind and make him casually agree, was more troublesome.

“I told you, didn’t I? We have our pride and traditions. Using force goes against both of those.”

“In that case, why not just give up on invading the surface?”

“We’re just taking back what is rightfully ours. I told you, we have our pride and traditions. While we want to regain our territory, we don’t hold a grudge against the people here. We know the pain of having something stolen, so we won’t attack the people here. Our enemy is much bigger.”

“So what, do you think I’ll just agree with you?”

And the most troublesome thing was that Kiriha’s behavior and belief were extremely correct.

If it had just been someone who was trying to force their way in, it would have been much easier for Koutarou.

“I’ll make you agree. We have plenty of time.”

Kiriha pressed her ample chest against Koutarou and looked up at him provocatively.

“Wh-wha!?”

Between her suspicious expression and the sensation of her large, soft breasts, Koutarou unintentionally jumped back. His heart started beating intensely.
“We have endured a millennium underground.”
“Wh-what about it?
“Fufufu, it means we have waited for 1000 years. But how long will you endure? Six months? A year? I’ll do anything to make you nod your head.”
Kiriha nonchalantly threw a kiss at Koutarou.
“Ugh…”
Kurano Kiriha. The mysterious girl who came from underground.
A tough opponent appears.
For Koutarou, she was the strongest enemy right now.
“What’s with that! Showing off her large chest! And Koutarou too! Blushing at that obvious sex appeal!”
Sanae had peeked into the hallway to observe the situation, and she was furious.
Sanae wanted to chase Koutarou out.
But she had a strong dislike for Kiriha’s method, which she herself was unable to use.
“If you hand the room over for something like that I’ll never forgive you!”
Because of that, Sanae did not want Koutarou to be chased out by Kiriha. She had long forgotten her original goal.

“E-excuse me…”
A person began talking to Sanae.
“What!?”
“Hiii! So-sorry, so sorry, I was in the wrong!”
The voice belonged to Yurika, who had just woken up.
Frightened by Sanae’s attitude, she began to cry.
“It was just on impulse! I just wanted to know what was going on!”
“…Oh yeah, you were here too.”
“Nooooo! My very existence has been forgotten!”
“You’re being very annoying at this important time… Just stop crying already… Geez.”
Sanae, who had been floating in the air, landed in front of Yurika with a tired expression on her face.
Reluctantly, she began explaining the situation.
“That woman came from underneath the tatami mat, and while leaving me out of it, she’s trying to take control of this room. She said something about the underground people invading the surface and using this room as their base.”
“Un-underground people!? Really!?”
“There’s no need to be surprised about people living under the ground, right? Compared to you, she is a proper person.”
“You’re wrong! That’s prejudice! Why won’t you believe me!? Even though you believe in underground people invading the surface!?”

“How about you touch your chest and ask yourself that instead!”
“Chest…? Do you mean her big breasts are the reason?”
After looking down on her own chest, Yurika looked at Kiriha and Sanae and revealed a relieved smile. She was happy she wasn’t in last place.
“…Just mention breasts again. You won’t see the sunrise tomorrow.”
“Kyaaa! So-sorry! I’m so sorry! It’s all my fault!”
Hearing Sanae’s threats, the frightened Yurika ran for the wardrobe and closed its sliding door in a hurry.
“…Everything’s become such a mess.”
In the beginning, all she had to do was chase out Koutarou.
However, the situation began to develop in an unexpected direction.
“Anyways, Koutarou, if you fall for that woman’s tricks you’ll regret it!”
Unexpected feelings began budding in her small chest.
Unaware of that, Sanae ground her teeth as she watched Koutarou and Kiriha’s interactions.

Having finished laying out the dishes for supper, Koutarou’s stomach growled.
“Finally, dinner…”
It was now almost 10PM. It was only natural for his stomach to be growling.
“I apologize, Koutarou. For my sake…”
One of the reasons for the delay in dinner, Kiriha, took a seat to the right of Koutarou.
“If that’s what you think, then get out.”
“I can’t do that… By the way, Koutarou, why not share a meal with me?”
Laid out in front of Kiriha were stir-fried vegetables, meat, rice and miso soup.
“I don’t accept debts. I especially can’t afford to be careless around you.”
“Fufufu, you sure are earnest. It seems I’ll have to start breaking you down from there.”
Koutarou was sharing dinner with Kiriha because she had helped make it.
“That woman only helped, so you would leave this room? There’s no debt to be repaid; if anything, it’s the opposite.”
Sitting in front of Koutarou was a dissatisfied Sanae. She did not like Koutarou and Kiriha getting along.
“That’s not true. I only wish to deepen our friendship –”
“Hmph, we’ll see.”
There was no dinner in front of Sanae. Ghosts can’t eat anything, after all.
“That looks so much better than cup noodles…”
Said Yurika as she poured hot water from the kettle into her cup noodles.
Despite the high cost of living, the noodles could be bought for a bargain price of 98 yen.
The sad figure of Yurika could move you to tears.
“…Do you want some too?”
“Eh!?”
Because of that, Koutarou felt a little merciful.

“W-would that be alright?”
“Yu-Yurika! The water! The water! It’s overflowing!”
“Kyaaa! I’m sorry! I’m so sorry!”
Distracted by Koutarou’s offer, Yurika had not paid attention to her pouring, and the hot water had spilled out of her cup noodles.
Yurika put the kettle down on the tea table and hurriedly wiped up the hot water with a dishcloth.
“…You’re a helpless person, aren’t you…”
“I’m sorry, I’m so sorry! I’m clumsy and a blockhead!”
“That doesn’t matter… But what about dinner; will you eat too?”
“You’ll still share with me after what I just did!?”
The half-crying Yurika’s expression brightened, and she sped up her hands wiping up the water.
“Yeah, you can have some.”
“Thank you very much!”
“No need to say thanks. But in return, you have to get out after you eat.”
Hearing that, Yurika’s smile froze and her hands stopped.
“I-I can’t leave, so I’ll eat the cup noodles…”
Yurika’s shoulders slumped with disappointment.
However, like a child, Yurika kept staring at the meal in front of Koutarou.
“…It seems like she’s regretting her decision.”
“There’s no need to hold it in. You can eat your fill and then get out.”
“Aaaaaaaa…”
Yurika swallowed her saliva.
“No, Yurika! You can’t lose to this temptation! Yurika Fight!”
Yurika desperately tried to persuade herself, but the smell of the delicious food continued to tempt her.
She had been eating nothing but cup noodles for a while now, and the temptation was unbearable.
As such, Yurika kept staring at Koutarou’s meal, almost drooling.
“Just let it go, Yurika. All you have to do is get out of this room.”
“A-aaaaaa! The rice! The miso soup is calling me! So cruel, this torture is too much!”
Yurika’s stomach growled loudly. Her body seemed to have already given in to the temptation.
“…Dinner…”
While watching Koutarou and Yurika going back and forth, Sanae examined the other three’s meals.
“I haven’t eaten in years…”
“What’s wrong, Sanae?”
Koutarou felt something was off about Sanae, but she did not answer him right away.
She began talking only after several seconds had passed.
“…Hey, Koutarou and Yurika… Either one of you is fine, but…”
“What?”
“Ye-Yes, What is it?”
Koutarou answered nonchalantly whilst Yurika answered nervously.

“Could I possess you?”
Sanae’s next words were unexpected.
“Possess?”
Even so, what was more unexpected to Koutarou was Sanae’s serious attitude.
That’s why Koutarou wasn’t surprised and wanted her to explain herself in greater detail.
“Noooooooooooo!!”
Yurika, however, did not share Koutarou’s feelings at all.
“I don’t want to be possessed by a ghost no matter what! If you’re going to possess someone, let it be Satomi-kun, please!!”
Yurika left her cup noodles where they were, hurriedly jumped into the wardrobe, and closed the sliding door.
“Well you see, I’m a ghost, right?”
“Yeah.”
Koutarou and Sanae no longer expected anything from Yurika, so they continued their conversation as though nothing had happened.
“Because of that, I can’t eat stuff, right?”
“That’s right. Offerings would be as close as possible.”
“But if I possess someone, I can taste what that person eats.”
“Sanae, that method would work better if you possessed someone with the same wavelength as you. Wouldn’t it be better to possess me or Yurika instead?”
Kiriha, who had just been looking on, began to speak.
“That’s true, but Yurika’s like that, and Kiriha, I refuse to do it with you!”
“Why?”
“If I become indebted to someone like you, I know I’ll regret it!”
“…Well aren’t I hated…”
Kiriha smiled bitterly at Sanae.
“That’s how it is, so Koutarou, please!”
“What’s in it for me, then? Besides, I won’t let you just possess me and then get rid of me.”
Sanae put her hands together and lowered her head.
“Please! I won’t get rid of you! I just want to be able to taste food again!”
“…Really?”
“Yes!”
Sanae looked up and nodded repeatedly.
“The only thing I need you to endure is sore shoulders.”
“Sore?… Don’t say such things to the person you’re about to possess.”
“And if you let me possess you when you’re eating I wouldn’t mind a truce! That’s okay, right!? If your shoulders get stiff I’ll give you a massage!”
“A truce…”
That was an attractive proposition to Koutarou.

It'd mean the amount of people he'd have to chase out would be reduced to two, and the most aggressive, Sanae, would remain calm.
And all I have to do is endure stiff shoulders?... Alright.
"Alright, I'll accept those conditions."
"Really!?"
"Yeah, come on. I'm ready."
Koutarou tapped his own shoulders as he said that.
"Yeah!"
Sanae then suddenly jumped at Koutarou.
"Uwa!?"
"Thanks, Koutarou!"
Even if you call her a ghost, it's almost like she's a child.... Well, I guess she is a child.
That is what Koutarou felt as he looked at Sanae.
At that moment, the wardrobe door slid open, and Yurika's red face appeared from inside.
"....."
Yurika silently returned to the tea table.
She felt that the situation had calmed down, but was ashamed of her own behavior.
"So Sanae, all I have to do is eat like normal?"
"Yes! Just wait a minute; I'll possess you now!"
However, neither Koutarou nor Sanae paid any attention to Yurika at all.
And Kiriha, who was watching the two, paid no mind to Yurika either.
It was at about this time that Yurika would usually start complaining, but thankfully, that was not the case this time.
"Ei!"
Sanae spun around over to Koutarou's back and clung to him with her arms wrapped around his neck.
"Go ahead, Koutarou."
"This is what possession is like? It's quite different from what I had imagined..."
Koutarou could feel Sanae's small body on his back.
It was warm, and he could feel her breathing next to his ear.
She was weak to fortune goods, could pass through walls and use Poltergeist Attacks.
There was no doubt that she was a ghost, but Koutarou had gradually stopped thinking of Sanae as just a ghost.
"Yes! Eat up, Koutarou!"
Sanae, on the other hand, was in a very cheerful mood.
"Alright, Let's eat."
"Yes, Go ahead... I guess that's not my line."
"Hahaha, What does it matter"
Koutarou began eating while carrying Sanae on his back.
I wonder why...?
Strangely enough, Koutarou didn't feel anything negative towards Sanae at that moment.

“Ah, Koutarou, this one’s delicious!”
“I am honored you would praise me.”
“Kiriha made that one.”
“Hee~ Your clothes might be strange, but it seems you can cook at least… The taste is a bit strong, though.”
“Is that so?”
“It’s bad for your body.”
“Look, Koutarou, even Sanae is saying it. Starting tomorrow, we’ll make the taste weaker.”
“Hmph…”
Kiriha joined in, and they continued eating happily.
“…That looks delicious…”
Yurika looked on regretfully.
“And compared to that, I’m eating cup noodles…”
Yurika watched with a sad expression on her face as she gently peeled open the lid of her cup noodles.
The fragrance of synthetic seasoning rose up from the cup.
“Ah…”
Disappointed by the smell, Yurika’s hand twitched and the tore the lid off halfway.
Yurika attempted to peel off the torn portion, but some of the lid remained, and the overall appearance of the cup worsened.
“…Today has just been terrible… ”
As she said this, her disposable chopsticks broke, and the left and right chopsticks took on different shapes.
“Koutarou! Miso soup! Miso soup!”
“I got it, so just calm down a little.”
“It’s hot, so be careful, Koutarou.”
While watching the three enjoying themselves, Yurika’s chopsticks reached out for the cup noodles.
“Why is it always me…”
Grieving by herself, Yurika slurped up her cup noodles.
“They’re even soggy…”
The 98 yen noodles tasted slightly saltier than normal.

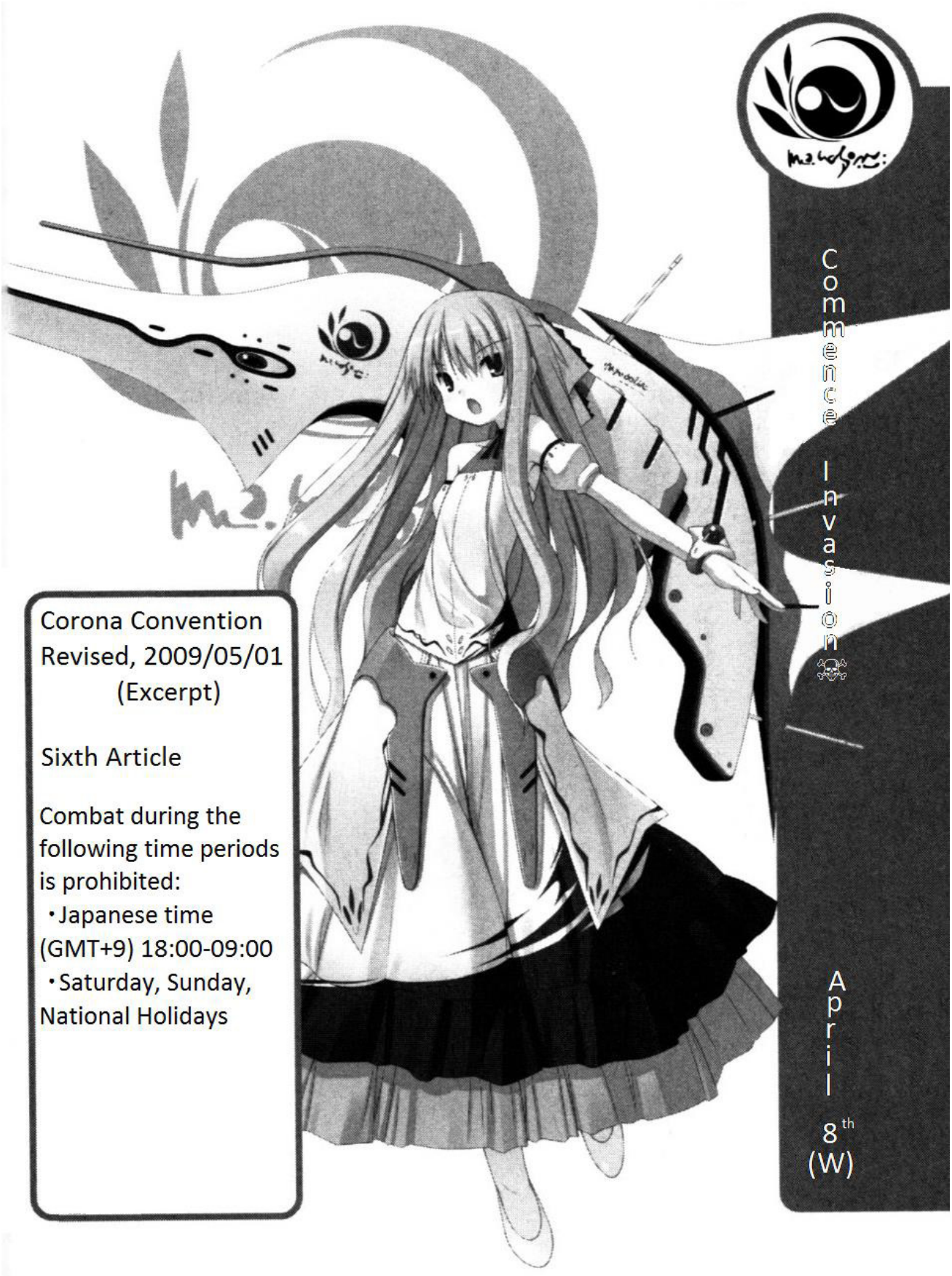
“Well then, now that we’ve eaten, let’s return to the original subject.”
“Original subject?”
Kiriha asked as she poured some after-meal tea.
“The subject of throwing you out!”
Sanae laughed at Kiriha while resting her chin on Koutarou’s shoulder.
“Sanae, you want to keep living here, so you’re chasing out everyone else, correct?”
“Yes. Well, we have a truce at the moment.”
“Right, and Kiriha-san, you want this room so you can rebuild your altar.”
“That’s right.”

“And Yurika, you want to hold a cosplay party with your friends here.”
“You’re wrong!”
“And I live here, so I don’t want to move out. And I won’t find someplace with rent as cheap as 5,000 yen anywhere else. Besides, if I just hand this room over, there will be various inconveniences.”
If Koutarou moved out, the rumors of the ghost would just spread further.
Or there would be an invasion or cosplay parties held daily.
As Shizuka’s friend, Koutarou wanted to prevent that at any cost.
I understand why this place is so valuable to her.
“Please listen to me! There really is danger approaching!”
“And not everyone wants to fight it out… Even though I’m good in a fistfight.”
“It is not my purpose to harm people.”
“We are currently in a truce, after all.”
“I won’t be holding any cosplay parties!”
“And none of us have any intention of backing down.”
“Of course.”
“This is my home!”
“It’s dangerous! Please, everyone get out as fast as you can!”
“With that being said, Koutarou, we must resolve this somehow. Aside from the prolonged negotiation with you, there are two others after this room. At this rate, our progress will grind to a halt. It’s obvious we will never come to an understanding, so we must solve this in a way everyone can agree with.”
“Yes, that’s right… But that method is…”
Koutarou agreed with Kiriha and looked around.
If only Mackenzie was here at a time like this.
For Koutarou, who was more action than words, there had been no time where he had wanted to borrow Kenji’s wisdom more than right then.
But on the other hand, he couldn’t just call the cops.
If he started talking about ghosts, underground people, and cosplayers, they would just think that he had lost his mind.
He was unable to rely on outsiders.
“Please listen! I just can’t accept this! Why won’t you believe me!? The magic power gathering here is dangerous!”
“Does anyone have any good ideas? A method that everyone would agree to…”
“That’s a tough one…”
“Hmm… a fair method… Hey, Koutarou, what about this? We play some kind of game, and the loser has to leave.”
“Like I said, I can’t accept this! Please listen to me!”
“To decide this fairly with a game is a good idea. If you look back upon history, there are many examples of competing over territory using games.”
“Wait just a second! I don’t want this kind of important thing to be decided by a game!”
Kiriha was onboard with Sanae’s idea, but the same could not be said for Koutarou.

The reason was simply because Kiriha was smart and Koutarou was not.
“Koutarou, would you rather have us hit each other or continue an endless discussion?”
“A fistfight… Discussions…”
Koutarou gave up the idea of a fistfight after looking at Sanae and Kiriha.
And looking at Yurika, he gave up on having a discussion.
“Ku, it looks like there’s no other way…”
Although they had fought on the day they met, for some reason Koutarou did not want to hit Sanae now.
The religious tools he had gotten from Shizuka were all still in their box.
He was at a loss as to whether what Kiriha was saying was rational or unreasonable.
And he didn’t think reason or discussion would get anywhere with Yurika.
“A game… A game, huh…”
Koutarou’s shoulders slumped for a moment, but he soon recollected himself and looked at Sanae.
“Alright, Sanae, if we were to play a game, what would it be?”
“How about an easy one like rock-paper-scissors?”
Sanae put up a finger and slightly tilted her head.
But Kiriha shook her head at the proposal.
“Rock-paper-scissors would be bad. It’s too simple, and luck would play far too great a part. For everyone to agree, we will need a game where a person’s ability will be the focus.”
“That said, we can’t use shougi or chess, can we? There are merits and demerits.”
“I haven’t played either.”
“A game even a beginner would be able to play and that contains an element of luck, but where player skill would come out on top after playing several times…. It’s a classic, but what about card games?”
“Card games… like Trump?”
“It wouldn’t have to be limited to just Trump, though.”
“I’m fine with that. I’ve played a lot with Mom and Dad.”
“…Fine… Call it cosplay or whatever you like… If you’ll get out anything is fine…”
Koutarou looked at the three and took a big breath.
“…Alright. It seems we’ve all agreed, so let’s go with that. My room is on the line, and I wanna get through with this ridiculous thing as soon as possible.”
Koutarou couldn’t hit the smiling Sanae, who still clung to his back.
He was unable to persuade Yurika.
And he didn’t have any confidence that he’d be able to endure Kiriha’s plotting for much longer.
Koutarou had no choice to but to go with this.
“No objections. So, Koutarou, what kind of card games will we play?”
“Let’s see…”
“Koutarou, how about the four of us take turns picking the game? That way it’ll be fair.”
“In that case, we’ll need to add points for the placings.”
“Indeed. At the very least, it needs to continue for everyone to get a turn.”
“Uuuu! After all, no one listens to my opinions.”

“Hey Koutarou, the two of us have a truce, so we should work together. It’ll be easier that way, and after we’re done, we just need to talk it out.”
“You’re on. If I play normally I’ll probably just lose to Kiriha.”
“Kiriha-san, those two are teaming up…”
“That’s the kind of thing that usually happens in territory disputes. Fufufu, it looks like I can’t let my guard down. Shall the two of us work together to defeat them?”
“Y-Yes please!”
Like that, the games to determine the ownership of the room began.

Commence Invasion ☠



Birds were singing beyond the open floral curtains.
The curtains were Shizuka's. Along with the futon, she had prepared various things before Koutarou had moved in.
"Uwa, It's already morning, Koutarou."
Sanae, who had gotten up first, had pulled the curtains back, and outside of the window was a clear blue sky. Sunshine streamed down, lighting up the residential area.
Upon a pillar a couple of small birds were singing.
It was a completely normal morning.
"It's already past 7 AM…"
Koutarou rubbed his tired eyes and looked through the window, the blue sky and white light entering his eyes.
The sunlight passed through Sanae and lit up the tatami mats behind her.
It looked to Koutarou as if Sanae had a solid body, but it was at times like these that he was reminded that she really was a ghost.
"Another all-nighter…"
The date was Wednesday, the 8th of April. Koutarou had now pulled three all-nighters in a row.
"Sorry, Koutarou; with this I'm out."
"Uwa, Really!?"
Kiriha pulled a card from Koutarou's hand and placed two cards on the tea table, emptying her hand.
The game they were playing right now was Sanae's specialty, Old Maid.
"Ouch~ Koutarou, just don't end up in last place okay?"
"I got it."
As he replied to Sanae, Koutarou extended his hand towards Yurika's cards.
"A, Auuu…"
Yurika, who had a terrible poker face, closed her eyes. If she didn't, Koutarou would just see right through her.
If it wasn't for Kiriha, Yurika would've run out of points long ago.
"Urya!"
"…Uhm.."
Hearing Koutarou's voice and feeling the sensation of a card being pulled from her hand, Yurika opened her eyes.
"Hauuuuuuu!"
Despite her efforts, the card remaining in her hand was the despicable Joker, laughing in her face.
"Alright! I'm out!"
Koutarou completed his hand and threw his cards onto the table.
"I lost!"
A cheerful Koutarou and a depressed Yurika; their appearances contrasted.
"Which means I'm first, Kiriha is second, Koutarou is third, and Yurika is dead last."
"Indeed. With this, the points are back to where they started."

As she said that, Kiriha updated the score sheet hanging up on the wall. As she had said, each point total added up to 20.
According to their rules, first place received three points from someone and second place one point.
In third place you lost one point, and in fourth you lost three points.
Which meant there was a two points' difference between each position.
And everyone started with 20 points.
Those who lost their points would be declared losers and forced to leave the room.
"We weren't able to get a point lead..."
"It seems we are quite even."
Next to the yawning Koutarou, Kiriha's shoulders slumped.
The card games had gone on all night, but there was still no conclusion anywhere in sight.
They were able to stop each other's victory, and as a result no one ended up with 0 points.
At one point, Yurika had been close to losing all of her points, but she had been able to mount a comeback thanks to a lot of luck.
After that, the points had just gone back and forth.
"What are you going to do, Koutarou? It's time to go to school."
Sanae pointed at the clock hanging up on the wall.
The hands were indicating 7:30 AM, meaning Kenji would arrive any moment now.
"...Everyone, do you mind if we continue this after I get back?"
Koutarou pulled out his bag while yawning.
"In reality there's no time to spare, but... I don't think there will be any danger during the day."
"I don't mind. I feel like resting for a while."
As Kiriha and Yurika agreed, the doorbell rang out.
"Hey, Kou, are you up!?"
Kenji had arrived.
"Yeah, I'm coming!"
Koutarou shouted towards the front door and then whispered to the others.
"...Everyone, make sure Mackenzie doesn't see you when I leave, please."
"Because it'll be a pain? I already know."
Sanae turned off the lights in the room while answering.
This was so nobody would notice that there were people left inside the room.
"Yurika, come over here a little bit more. The front door is in plain view over there."
"Ah, ye-yes, Kiriha-san."
And the three made sure they couldn't be seen from the entrance.
Koutarou had a feeling something bad would happen if they were found.
The day before yesterday it had been Sanae, yesterday it had been Sanae and Yurika, and today it was Sanae, Yurika and Kiriha.
Surely... There won't be four tomorrow, will there?...
"...No way."

Koutarou shook his head lightly and gave a wry smile as he turned his back on the three, suppressing a yawn.
He couldn't take it too easy with Kenji waiting on the other side of the door.
"Didn't sleep much, Koutarou?"
"Something like that. I'll sleep at school."
"That'll do you good. It'll be bad for your body if you force yourself."
"Goodbye, Koutarou-san."
"See you, Koutarou. Come back as soon as you can, okay? We're waiting for you."
"Yeah… I'm off."
"I wish I could go to school… Being home all the time is just boring."

Embraced by the early spring's calm atmosphere and the warm sunshine, time drifted in the clubroom after school.
Right now, the only time Koutarou could feel at ease was at school.
At home there were three girls trying to take over his room. Compared to that, the time spent in the clubroom was like heaven.
"I wish it was always like this… Fuaaaaa."
As he relaxed, Koutarou let out a yawn.
Having endured several all-nighters, Koutarou was exhausted.
Although he had slept during class, he was far from recovering his stamina.
"Not good, gotta keep knitting…"
"Are you okay, Satomi-kun?"
Harumi, who was sitting next to him, didn't let the yawn slip by unnoticed.
She gazed at Koutarou with a concerned look on her face.
"I'm fine, Sakuraba-senpai."
"But, you don't look… Have you been sleeping properly?"
Koutarou tried to play it off, but it didn't work. Instead, the concerned look on Harumi's face grew more serious, and she leaned forward slightly.
Because of her weak constitution, she took her and others' health seriously.
"Hahaha, I just moved in and I haven't quite gotten used to it yet. I'll be back to normal soon, Sakuraba-senpai."
"…I hope so…"
"That aside, Senpai, show me that knitting technique one more time."

Using the knitting method he had learned the day before, Koutarou had begun to work on an actual project, with Harumi guiding him along the way.
"…I got it. I'll do it again slowly, so make sure you watch."
"Yes, please."
Harumi was still worried, but she moved her hands at Koutarou's request.
Satomi-kun, it's fine to be enthusiastic, but are you really okay?

Still worried about Koutarou, Harumi considered ways to allow him to rest as she was knitting.
And after showing him the technique, she came up with an idea.
That's right, maybe if I leave him alone…
Harumi immediately put her plan into action.
"…And like this. Did you understand, Satomi-kun?"
"Yes. You're a big help; I'll try it out right away."
Koutarou began moving his knitting needles.
Although awkward, he displayed his intent and motivation.
It's because you're working so hard…
Harumi put her knitting needles and yarn on the desk and stood up.
"Satomi-kun, is it alright if I leave you to keep an eye on the clubroom for a while?"
"Y-Yes… I don't mind, but what now, all of a sudden?"
Koutarou stopped moving his hands and looked up at Harumi.
"I forgot that the committee was calling for me. I'll be back soon."
"Okay, I got it. I'll keep watch while you're away."
"Sorry, please do."
Harumi bowed lightly and headed towards the exit.
"…Satomi-kun, I hope you'll be able to sleep a little with this…"
"Senpai, did you say something?"
"Not at all. I'll be back."
"Okay, see you soon."
Harumi left a small smile behind as she exited the room.
Hm?… That's…

When Koutarou came to, he saw the room dyed red by the evening sun.
"Oh crap, I fell asleep…"
The knitting needle in his hand had been placed on the desk, and the coat from a girl's uniform had been draped over his body.
"Were you able to sleep well?"
Koutarou raised his head, and in front of him was a gently smiling Harumi.
Having taken off her coat, she was knitting in her blouse.
"Senpai, I…"
"I was about to wake you up. It's almost 6 PM."
Harumi stopped her knitting and showed him the time.
The time was now 5:45 PM, almost time for the school to close for the day.
"I'm sorry for falling asleep in the middle of club activities, Senpai!"
For Koutarou, who had been taught to strictly respect his elders, this was a big problem.
He apologized and bowed deeply.
"It's fine, Satomi-kun. It's… Um… O-our society, after all."

As she said that, her cheeks turned red with embarrassment, but Koutarou, who was bowing, did not see her.
“That’s why, Senpai!”
“No, that’s wrong. It’s our society, so as long as we agree, it’s alright if we do what we want.”
“Sakuraba-senpai…”
“Satomi-kun, look after your body, please.”
Oh I see, Senpai…
Looking at Harumi’s serious face Koutarou finally remembered her weak constitution.
That’s why she was so worried…
Koutarou was both grateful and sorry to have made her feel anxious.
“Understood, I’ll look out for myself more.”
“Yes… Thank you, Satomi-kun.”
Hearing Koutarou’s answer, Harumi responded cheerfully.
I should be the one worried about her. I gotta snap out of it…
The past three days had been nonstop trouble due to three strange people, but thanks to Harumi’s gentleness, Koutarou was able to regain some spirit.

“I’m back.”
When Koutarou opened the door, it was still dark inside, and Sanae, who had welcomed him back yesterday, was nowhere to be found.
“Hm?”
While Koutarou was thinking, Sanae poked her face out from the inner room.
“Koutarou, this way, come fast!”
“What is it?”
“It’ll be faster for you to see it yourself. Come on, Koutarou!”
“Something’s wrong!”
After Sanae both Kiriha and Yurika called out to him.
The three voices sounded surprisingly serious, so he hurriedly left his shoes by the entrance and entered the room.
“What’s up with you three, you still haven’t even turned on the… Ehhhh!?”
Bounding into the room, Koutarou opened his eyes wide in surprise.
“Wh-What’s that!?”
An abnormality had occurred in the inner room.
In the dark space, the wall furthest away was glowing dimly.
The glowing abnormality was almost two meters in height and one meter in width.
“This was just a wall, right!? What happened!?”
“…That’s what we want to know.”
Kiriha turned the lights on in the room, and the glow of the wall became slightly less noticeable.
“Sanae, did you cause this?”

“That’s rude! It wasn’t me! Don’t try to make everything my fault! Besides. what’d be the point of making the wall glow!?”
“You have a point…”
Koutarou suspected Sanae after having seen countless paranormal phenomena caused by her, but after hearing her argument he concluded she must have had nothing to do with it.
Like she said, she had nothing to gain from making the wall glow.
“Don’t just blame me right away, geez!”
Dissatisfied, Sanae puffed up her cheeks and floated in midair.
“It can’t be helped. You’re a ghost after all.”
“Hmph! Who cares what you think anyways!”
And Sanae looked away from Koutarou.
“Come on, don’t sulk just because I doubted you for a moment…”
As Koutarou was trying to calm Sanae down, somebody pulled the sleeve of his uniform.
“Excuse me, Satomi-san.”
“Hm? What is it, Yurika?”
The one pulling his sleeve was Yurika. She let go of his sleeve and curled her mouth into a coy smile.
“The wall: it’s glowing, isn’t it?”
“Yes, it is.”
“Something strange is happening, isn’t it?”
“Yes, it is…”
“Haven’t you considered that it might be my magic?”
“…I might have.”
As Koutarou nodded for the third time he turned to Kiriha.
“Kiriha-san, how long has the wall been like this?”
Koutarou had already lost interest in Yurika.
“Why!? You could at least doubt me a little bit!! It’s a supernatural phenomenon, you know!? It’s a complete mystery! It might be my magic!”
“Just a while ago, roughly 10 minutes before you got home.”
“10 minutes…”
“It’s not fair! It’s unfair to believe in ghosts but not magic! I demand a correction and an apology!”
“Karama, Korama, please tell Koutarou the results of the measurements as well.”
“Yes-ho!”
“Leave it to us, Ane-san-ho!”
The two haniwas flew up to Koutarou.
“There are no readings for radiation, electromagnetic waves, heat, vibration, or spiritual energy-ho. The only data we’re receiving is from a few radiating photons-ho!”
“But we can’t measure the other side of the glow-ho. It’s almost as if there’s an invisible wall-ho! It’s not even certain where the photons are coming from-ho.”
The haniwas explained everything in detail with gestures, but it made no sense to Koutarou.
“I don’t get it; what does this mean?”

“It means apart from not being able to see the other side of the glow, it’s a completely normal wall… However, if technology I don’t know of is involved, that might not be the case.”
“In other words, it’s just a glowing wall we know nothing about.”
Koutarou slowly approached the wall.
“Aaaaa, if you could just give me a portion of that doubt…”
Yurika started sobbing behind Koutarou.
“If you could just believe there are girls with mysterious powers…! Why!? I’m trying to so hard to make you believe me too!”
However, Koutarou was focused on the wall, so Yurika’s complaints fell on deaf ears.
“Koutarou, don’t just carelessly touch it, okay?”
“…It sounds so persuasive when you say it.”
What reached Koutarou’s ears instead was Sanae’s voice.
Sanae floated up next to Koutarou as they approached the glowing wall together.
“Don’t treat me like I’m some sort of floating danger!”
“That’s exactly what you are!”
“What’s that supposed to mean!? I’ve had it! I was just thinking of protecting you if something happened too! And you just trample all over my feelings! You’re just terrible!”
Sanae began sulking and returned to where Kiriha and Yurika were standing.
“…You won’t die a pretty death, Koutarou, I’m sure of it!”
“He won’t even believe in magic either!”
“This is a common occurrence for people our age. A good woman would overlook something like this.”
“I’m just a kid. I don’t care!”
They’re not feeling any tension whatsoever…
That’s what Koutarou thought while listening to the girls.
Stopping 30 centimeters in front of it, Koutarou observed the glowing wall.
“Apart from glowing, it looks just like a normal wall.”
The glow was weak and you could see the wall behind it. Even the recently changed wallpaper could be seen clearly.
“What’s up with this…”
Koutarou brought his hand closer to the light, but it was not hot, just as Kiriha had said.
However, it was not clear if touching the wall would be safe.
“Now then, what to do…”
While Koutarou was considering whether to touch the wall or not, a change took place.
“Oh?”
At the center of the glowing wall, roughly one meter from the ground, a blue disk about 30 centimeters in diameter appeared.

From the middle of the disk, beams of light began to form a picture.
It looked like a man wearing armor and fighting a large reptile.
“A knight and a dragon... Is it some kind of crest?”
Koutarou brought his face closer to examine the mysterious image.
He noticed that it wasn’t just a picture, but a three-dimensional sculpture, which strengthened his impression that it was indeed a crest.
“But why is there a crest on a glowing wall?”
Koutarou brought his face closer to the crest, but all of a sudden his view was blocked.
“Eh? What!?
His field of vision suddenly went dark, and his face was pressed against something soft and warm.
Caught by surprise, Koutarou’s body stiffened.
“Hanya!?”
A girl’s voice could be heard right next to Koutarou.

Everyone in the room was surprised, but the most surprised of all was the one who had surprised Koutarou and the others.
“Ho-How rude!! You don’t just bury your face in a princess’s chest! This is unforgivable, even for a clueless Neanderthal!”
“Eh? What!? What’s going on!?”
Having somebody yell right next to his ears caused Koutarou to attempt to push his face away from what it was pressing against by placing his hands against it and gently thrusting away from his face.
“Waaa!? You touched a princess’s chest!? Grabbed it!? Fondled it!?”
“Ehhh!?”
Standing before the staggering Koutarou was a girl silhouetted by the problematic wall.
She was short, but still slightly taller than Sanae.
With her blonde hair and blue eyes, she was most likely a foreigner.
She was wearing a beautiful dress of radiant white. The ends of the spread skirt covered up a large part of the room.
And upon her golden hair was a silver tiara decorated with jewels.
“...Who?”
“It’s not who! Get your hands off me this instant, Neanderthal!”
“Hands?”
When his hands were mentioned, Koutarou put some force into his fingertips.

“Waaaa, do-don’t fondle them, you fool!!”
“Wa, Waaaaa!?”
Koutarou finally noticed that his hands were planted firmly on the girl’s chest.
“So-sorry!”
“A ‘sorry’ won’t cut it! You buried your face in my chest all of a sudden, and then you even groped them repeatedly!”
The girl’s face was dyed red with rage and humiliation. She shouted at Koutarou while covering her chest with her arms.
“This noble chest that you played around with so, filled with desire, is not something the likes of you can touch! You should consider yourself lucky you are not slain on the spot!”
“Desire!? No, that wasn’t my intention, this is all just a misunderstanding! It was just an accident!”
Koutarou shook his head, panicking.
“All criminals say the same thing!”
“That’s not true! Who would want to fondle that flat chest!? Even I have the right to chose which breasts I fondle!”
“Fl-flat?”
The girl’s expression froze.
“Do you think I’d take such a risk for that washing board chest!? Don’t make me laugh!”
“Washing board…?”
The girl was stunned and looked up at Koutarou. Her eyes were wide open and her face was twitching.
“That’s right~ Koutarou spent all of yesterday fondling Kiriha’s breasts, so he has no need to fondle those.”
Sanae chimed in; she was still holding a grudge against Koutarou from before.
“Don’t talk about me like I’m some sort of pervert!”
“There’s no need to deny it. You know you want to fondle them, you pervert~”
“Koutarou, do you want to fondle my breasts?”
Kiriha lightly thrust her chest towards Koutarou, and her large breasts bounced.
“I don’t! I won’t fondle anyone’s breeeeasts!”
“There’s no need to hold back, you know?”
“I won’t leave this room in return!”
Yurika, who had been silently watching, pumped herself up by raising her fist up towards the heavens.
“You got a high rank! Good job Yurika! Fight!”
Ranking the chest sizes of the girls in the room, the order went from largest to smallest: Kiriha, Yurika, Sanae, and lastly the mysterious girl. Yurika was glad she was second.
“…Either way, you don’t want to fondle those…”
Yurika gave the lowest ranking chest a pitying look.
“I’m telling you it was an accident! Who would want to go out of their way to touch those!?”
“Th-those… You called them those… Flat, washing board… those…”
The girl looked down.
“You don’t need to say it like that. She is still young, so she has plenty of time to grow.”

“Uwa~ That’s a mean way of putting it, Kiriha~ The elite have it easy.”
“I didn’t mean it like that!”
“But, she’s even losing to Sanae-chan… They’re not going to grow that much…”
As Yurika said that with deep pity in her voice, the girl’s shoulders began to tremble.
Koutarou interpreted it as if she was about to cry, but her voice was far from that of a crying voice.
“Fu, fufufu, fufufufu, ahahahaha…”
It was an almost sad, dry laugh.
“You pity me. I see, you pity me, a princess!”
At that time, Koutarou thought that he could hear the sound of the girl’s restraint snapping.
“I’ll kill you! I’ll kill you all right now! I’ll make sure none of you will be able to keep flapping your mouths!”
The girl screamed, swung both her hands around and stomped the ground with her foot.
The girl had completely lost it.
“…It looks you made her angry, Koutarou. You should apologize right away.”
“That’s right, Koutarou. You should do it while the wounds are still shallow.”
“It’s because you’re bullying her, Satomi-san. There aren’t that many who can handle being bullied as well as me.”
“Don’t try to blame this all on me! You’re the ones who finished her off! Besides, just look at her, she’s well past the point of persuasion!”
“Fuhahahaha, you Neanderthals! You won’t even have time to realize your sins! Once your bodies have vaporized, you’ll regret ever going up against me!”
The girl who had lost it laughed loudly at Koutarou and the rest.
It was impossible for anyone to persuade someone this angry.
“Blue Knight! Activate the anti-personnel weapons system!”
While the girl kept laughing loudly, she shouted at the bracelet on her right hand.
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
And the bracelet on her hand lit up and responded to the girl.
“What’s that girl doing?”
“Who knows… She’s so angry that she’s talking to her bracelet; she’s a bit scary.”
Two black disks about 20 centimeters in diameter appeared one after the other above her right and left shoulders.
Strangely enough, they had no thickness.
“SELECT THE WEAPONRY.”
“Anti-personnel Pulse Laser, Sonic Impact Cannon! Fill them with holes, pulverize them, and blow them away!”
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
Immediately after the girl’s commands were shouted, something metallic could be seen emerging from the black disks.
Although the disks had no thickness, the metal was oddly three-dimensional.
It was almost as if the black disks were some kind of window.

“What the heck is that?”
The metal resembled a muzzle as it turned and pointed at Koutarou.
And from the left hole, bluish-white light began to shine.
At the same time, a low-pitched sound making the room shake came from the right.
“I’m getting a bad feeling about this…”
Koutarou, who was feeling danger from the disks, was not sure what to do, so he lowered his body and took a stance for the time being.
“Emergency alert-ho! The things you can see from the black holes appear to be weapons-ho!”
“Energy reaction-ho! The current presumption is that the left side is an energy weapon, and the right side is a shock wave cannon-ho! They will be ready to attack within a few seconds-ho!!”
“Get down, Koutarou!! She’s shooting!”
Kiriha’s desperate voice entered Koutarou’s ears, telling him what to do.
“What!?”
“It’s already too late! Wipe them out, Blue Knight!”
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
The panicked Koutarou leered at the girl shouting orders at her bracelet.
“Koutarou!!”
“Owaaa!?”
In that moment Koutarou fell down onto the tatami mat. Sanae had tackled him and forcibly pulled him down.
At the same time, several blue beams passed through the spot where Koutarou had stood.
Right afterwards white bullets passed by, as if chasing the blue beams.
“Kyaaaa!?”
The blue beam passed right by Yurika’s ear and burned a couple strands of her hair, and as she bent over in surprise the white bullets arrived.
The white bullets hit Yurika’s broom and exploded, making a loud sound.
Right afterwards, a strong shock wave was generated, knocking Yurika off of her feet.
“Why is it always meeee!!”
Yurika, who had lost her balance, was sent rolling on top of the tatami mats.
“Gyafu!”
Yurika rolled into the wall and stopped. She was no longer moving; she had lost consciousness.
“That was close! That’s a weapon!?”
Looking at Yurika, Koutarou finally understood the danger he was in, and a chill ran down his spine.
Koutarou didn’t know what kind of weapons the girl was using, but one look at Yurika told him what would happen if he got hit.
“Are you alright, Koutarou!? Get up! The next one’s coming!!”
“Ah, yeah!”
“Tsk, looks like one of them is perceptive.”
The girl spat out those bitter words as she glared at Koutarou.
And the muzzle peeping out from the holes above the girl’s shoulders pointed towards Koutarou.

“But in this narrow room, the next won’t miss!! Blue Knight, continue firing in synchronous mode!”
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
“Don’t be like that, shorty!”
“You don’t just insult my chest, but my height as well, Neanderthal!?”
“You stupid idiot!”
“Argh, you’re even calling me stupid!?”
“I am! You self-conscious inverted chest!”
As Koutarou was saying that, signs of the girl attacking appeared again.
The bluish-white light and loud sound.
“Koutarou, don’t bicker with her! Just get up, hurry!”
“Waaaaaaa!! Oh crap!!”
Koutarou was still in the middle of getting up, and even with Sanae’s help it didn’t look like they would make it in time before the next attack.
“Ahahaha! You’re too slow! It’s already over! You can regret the crime of making a fool of me once you’ve been reduced to ashes!”
“Karama, Korama, Spiritual Energy Field to maximum output!”
“Understood-ho!”
Along with the sharp voice, the two haniwas stepped between Koutarou and the girl.
“But we’ll lose in terms of power-ho! We’re not good against physical attacks-ho!”
“I just need you to endure one attack! You need to block it no matter what!”
“Got it-ho!”
The blue beam and white bullets shot out.
But at that moment, a sphere of yellow light enveloped Koutarou and the rest.
It was a shield the two haniwas had made.
As the shield of light was assailed by the blue beam, it shattered like glass and was blown away.
The haniwas’ shield was only barely able to block the blue beams – the Pulse Laser attack.
So the slightly delayed white bullet – the Shock Wave Cannonball - passed by with ease and headed for Koutarou and the rest.
“Waaaa, This time it’s all over!!”
“Hissatsu[1]! Sanae-chan Bomber!”
However, before the bullet could hit Koutarou, Sanae prevented it by throwing a cushion with her Poltergeist.
The bullet and cushion collided in the air, and an explosion was heard, along with cotton being scattered all over the room.
“Tsk!”
“Ho~”
“Hoho~”
Apart from Sanae, everyone was thrown towards the walls by the shock wave.
That was enough for Corona House to start shaking and screaming.

1 Literally translated to Certain Kill, I felt it would be better if left untranslated

“Is everyone okay!? You haven’t been done in, have you!?”
“I’m neither! Even if I’m okay for now, I won’t be sooner or later!”
Koutarou stood up, shaking his head, and grabbed the bat that was leaning against the wall next to him.
“What are you going to do!?”
“The only way to survive is to attack before she recovers!”
The girl in question had lost her balance from the shock wave.
Because the cushion had struck the bullet near her, the shock wave had reached her as well.
“Tsk, by something like this… Blue Knight, change to Sonic Impact Cannon and Ion Blaster! This room is too small!”
Noticing Koutarou approaching, she ordered the bracelet to change weapons.
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
“You’re too slow!”
But before her weapons were able to change, Koutarou swung his bat down.
He was aiming for the pulse laser sticking out of the hole above her right shoulder.
“It’s no use, Neanderthal!”
However, the bat did not reach the pulse laser.
Immediately before it hit the barrel, it collided with something translucent and bounced off.
“What!?”
“You thought you were the only ones with a barrier!? How careless!”
The girl stood up, a grin brimming with confidence on her face.
She was surrounded by white hexagons.
Like the haniwas’ shield of light, it was a barrier against attacks.
“This is bad-ho! The barrier’s power is on a different level-ho!”
“It’s a repulsion barrier-ho! It’s far superior than ours against anything but spiritual energy-ho!”
“Just who is that girl!?”
Kiriha was aghast at the overwhelming difference in power.
Kiriha and the others’ attacks barely had any effect, but they couldn’t block their opponent’s attacks.
“Dammit, what’s with that hard shell? Unless we do something about that, we’re not getting anywhere!”
“Stop, Koutarou! We have no way of breaking it!”
“What? Really!?”
“It’s true, Neanderthal! The difference between our powers is like that of heaven and earth! You won’t be able to so much as lay a finger on me!”
The girl stopped her attack and boasted triumphantly.
“…I’m not so sure about that.”
Sanae floated in front of the boasting girl, poking at her.
“Wh-what!? W-what did you just do!?”
Since Sanae suddenly appeared in front of her, the girl’s face was twitching.
“What? I was just poking you.”

Sanae had easily passed through the barrier the girl had been boasting about.
Although it could protect against any attacks, it seems that it couldn't keep ghosts out.
"Good job, Sanae! Now restrain her!"
"Fine, fine. You sure are bossy..."
Sanae began depriving the girl of her freedom while she was still surprised.
She gripped the hem of the girl's dress with her Poltergeist.
"What are you doing!?"
"Who knows what someone like you will do if I let you be! In other words, Hissatsu Sanae-chan Tulip!"
Sanae lifted the edges of the girl's skirt.
"Uwawa, wh-what!?"
"Just relax!"
Sanae lifted the skirt up over the girl's head and wrapped it around like a drawstring purse.
With her underwear exposed, she looked similar to a tulip, as Sanae had said.
"Stop it, you boorish ruffian! I can't see anything!"
"No way~ If I stop, you'll just attack me."
The girl struggled, but Sanae's power was too strong, and she was unable to break free.
"Kiriha-san."
"What is it, Koutarou?"
"I know my life is at stake, but right now she just looks like an idiot..."
"...Agreed. To think I'd see a bear there..."
The tulip struggled ineffectually.
It was a sight that invited laughter.
Moreover, imprinted on the girl's panties was a lovely bear. One couldn't help but laugh at the situation.
"If you give up, I'll let you go."
"There's no way the princess of the Holy Forthorthe Galactic Empire would bow her head to some primitive barbarians!"
"Then we'll just leave you like this."
"Grrr, you're just a Neanderthal!"
Sanae and the girl were bickering, and Sanae was currently winning.
Meanwhile, Koutarou let out a small sigh of relief.
"It looks like we'll at least be able to catch our breath."

“It’s about time.”
Kiriha smiled lightly as she replied to Koutarou.
However, the commotion was not about to stop, as the two had expected.
“Fine! If you want it that way, I have plans of my own!”
“What? Are you still planning on doing something?”
“Blue Knight! Change the battle mode to final attack mode! Fire a limited Genesis Buster! Turn the area centered around me into mere atoms!”
“AUTHENTICATION IS REQUIRED FOR ACTIVATION OF THE FINAL ATTACK MODE AND THE USE OF THE GENESIS BUSTER.”
“My name is Theiamillis Gre Masteil Sagurada von Forthorthe!!”
“AUTHENTICATION COMPLETE. CONFIRMED THE IDENTITY OF PRINCESS THEIAMILLIS. THE ORDER HAS BEEN ACCEPTED. AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.
The girl gave a complicated order, unlike before.
Looking at that, Koutarou once again felt a chill run down his spine.
“What are you planning on doing?”
“Don’t ask such foolish questions, Neanderthal. It’s obviously an attack.”
The tulip responded full of confidence.
The girl was probably laughing, but Koutarou was unable to see her face.
“An attack?”
However, nothing was happening in the room. The black holes floating above her shoulders remained motionless.
“Nothing’s happening…”
“Fufufu! Wahahahaha, that’s why you’re a Neanderthal! Don’t just assume that what you can see is all there is!”
The tulip shook left and right energetically.
“Emergency alert! A super-high energy emission roughly 50 meters in the sky-ho!”
“What!?”
Receiving Karama’s warning, Kiriha jumped to the window.
She then opened it in a hurry and leaned her body out.
Koutarou followed suit.
“That’s it!”
“What’s that!?”
In the sky above Corona House, a black hole similar to the ones floating above the girl’s shoulders could be seen.
Even though it was a starry night, that part of the sky was completely free of stars.
A large cylindrical object peeked out of the hole.
“Confirmed the generation of antimatter-ho! The mass is increasing rapidly-ho!”
“Antimatter!? What are its measurements!?”
“Currently at 58 grams-ho! And still increasing-ho!”
“Is that an antimatter cannon!? Impossible! Do you know what those kinds of things can do!?”

Kiriha turned to Tulip and shouted at her.
Koutarou was able to understand the seriousness of the situation by looking at the normally calm Kiriha acting like this.
“Of course I know! It’ll turn you Neanderthals into photons!”
Tulip laughed loudly at the panicking Kiriha.
“Koutarou, what’s antimatter?”
“Don’t ask me. That’s Mackenzie’s field of expertise.”
Koutarou and Sanae were unable to understand the term.
So the two just craned their necks without a care.
“To put it simply, antimatter is a terrifying nuclear weapon.”
Strictly speaking, the nuclear fission used in nuclear weapons is completely different from antimatter. However, the two release energy on an atomic level, so it was an appropriate explanation for the pair who didn’t understand at all.
“Nu-Nuclear!?”
“By nuclear you mean those things that always appear in movies and anime, where something terrible happens if they explode and leave behind a mushroom!?”
Because of that, Koutarou and Sanae could easily understand the situation and began panicking.
“L-Let’s run, Koutarou!”
“Y-Yeah!”
“It’s no use! The antimatter has already exceeded 100 grams! No matter how fast you flee, you’ll never be able to outrun it! What a pity!”
“...So it’s all over...”
Kiriha’s shoulders slumped as she sighed.
She very clearly understood the power of over 100 grams of antimatter.
“Don’t give up! Do something, Kiriha!”
“What do we do!? What should I do!?”
Only aware that it was a powerful weapon, Koutarou and Sanae panicked and ran around Kiriha.
“Petty tricks won’t be able to stop this weapon! It’s my victory!”
Tulip on the other hand was ecstatic. Able to vent all of her resentment, she laughed loudly.
Even the bear on her exposed panties looked like it was smiling to Koutarou.
“There’s nothing we can do. Please give up, Koutarou, Sanae.”
“Noooooooo! I don’t want to dieeeeeeee!”
“You’re already dead! Nuclear weapons and antimatter won’t do anything to you!”
“Oh yeah.”
Realizing that normal weapons wouldn’t work on ghosts, Sanae regained her calm.
“I’m sorry for your loss~”
“Hearing that from you strangely pisses me off!”
“It’s the privilege of being a ghost!”
Sanae turned to Koutarou and made a triumphant V-sign.

“You can’t be so sure when it comes to antimatter. With this much mass, the power might be so intense that the very fabric of space is distorted. Even a ghost might not be able to survive.”
“Did you hear that, Sanae!? Even ghosts can die!”
“Don’t rejoice, idiot!”
As Koutarou and the rest began falling into unrest and confusion, Tulip’s bracelet coldly reported in.
“THE GENERATION OF ANTIMATTER IS COMPLETE.”
“Excellent! Start the firing procedures! And don’t forget to recover me as you fire!”
“AS YOU WISH. INITIALIZING FIRING PROCEDURES.”
“Waaaa, they’re firing! They’re firing!”
“Noooooooooo! I don’t want to die young!”
“An unexpected end to the surface invasion… Although with this, there won’t be a Japan left to invade…”
The laughing girl, the restless Koutarou, Sanae clinging onto Koutarou, the melancholy Kiriha, and the still unconscious Yurika, who had no grasp of the situation.
The five people showed five different reactions as the time finally came.
“ANTIMATTER HAS FINISHED GENERATING. SAFETY RELEASED. AWAITING ORDER TO FIRE, MY PRINCESS.”
“Kukuku, and with this it’s over! Genesis Buster, FI-”
However, as the girl was about to give the order to fire, another voice filled the room, interrupting her.
“Please wait, Princess Theiamillis!”
“Ruth!?”
As the girl raised her voice in surprise, another person came jumping out from the glowing wall.
It looked very similar to how Sanae passed through walls.
The person coming through the wall was a girl wearing a military uniform with a short skirt.
She was taller than Tulip, at about the same height as Yurika.
“H-hey, a person just came through the wall!”
“What are you so surprised for? Tulip came through the same way.”
“Really, Kiriha-san?”
Koutarou hadn’t seen Tulip come out.
As he’d been busy examining the crest his sight had suddenly been blocked.
“Yes. The first girl came out of the wall the same way and bumped into you.”
Kiriha had already given up, but with the appearance of the other girl she had started recovering.
“Your Highness! What is the meaning of firing the Genesis Buster at this planet!?”
The new girl immediately began shouting at Tulip.
“B-but, they were making a fool of me!”
Tulip raised her objections, but her voice was completely different.
“It looks like that girl came to stop Tulip.”
“Really?”
Koutarou and Sanae watched the quarreling pair.
Koutarou and the rest were unable to comprehend this unexpected development.

“That doesn’t mean you can destroy this entire planet! First of all, it violates the galactic treaty!”
“Sanae, it seems like the weapon above us has enough power to destroy the planet.”
“So it would be a casual armageddon.”
“Knock on wood…”
“But they said I was flat, short and stupid! There’s no way I could forgive them!”
“There’s no one who would bring out a wide-area destruction weapon used in deep space combat for that kind of childish reason!”
“B-but Ruth!”
“No ‘buts’!”
The argument was falling into the favor of the new girl.
The number of words Tulip spoke had gradually decreased, and she was now mostly silent.
“Fuuuuu. It looks like everything will calm down… Geez.”
Kiriha let out a big sigh and relaxed her shoulders.
“Princess Theia, please settle down. If you kill the residents of this room you won’t be able to achieve the trial given to Your Highness. Do you want to be the quickest failure in the history of Forthorthe and bring shame to your mother?”
“…”
As soon as her mother was mentioned, Tulip stopped arguing.
“Your Highness, please open your mind. Forthorthe’s influence doesn’t reach this planet. We’re the ones forcing ourselves onto them.”
This girl has been saying reasonable things for a while now…
The past several days had been a mess of unreasonable people forcing themselves into this room.
So this new girl’s agreeable words were like music to Koutarou’s ears.
“I got it… Blue Knight, Relinquish attack mode and return to guard mode. Cancel the Genesis Buster.”
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
“Thank you, Your Highness.”
The new girl gave a relieved smile, and the rioting in the room seemed to have settled.
There were holes in the walls from the laser, and the wallpaper had been torn off in places by the shock waves.
The once-beautiful tatami mats had scorch marks left on them. The room was in pieces.
“If the landlord sees this she’ll probably cry…”
Koutarou looked around the room.
Corona House was the landlord Shizuka’s treasure.
It was a keepsake from her late parents.
And finding it in this state would almost certainly cause her a lot of grief.
Koutarou was painfully aware of that.
“Koutarou, please sit down, or we can’t start.”
“Oh, sorry, right away.”
As Kiriha called out to him, he turned around and saw five girls seated around the tea table.

The order they were sitting in was clockwise: Sanae, Kiriha, Yurika, Tulip, and the girl who had come after her.
There was a space left open between Sanae and Kiriha for Koutarou.
"...So I sit here."
Koutarou sat down in the open space.
"It's kind of cramped..."
"That's because we're up to six people now."
Kiriha shrugged at Sanae's words. Neither the tea table nor the room were designed for six people.
Because of that, the room felt very small with so many people in it.
"The problem we need to settle seems to have gotten bigger. I'm not saying we need to deepen our friendship..."
"Well that's true, but..."
Sanae had a sad look on her face.
"So to get to the point, who are you?"
"Hmph!"
Tulip – The girl in the dress who had been the first to come out of the wall - refused to answer.
And she provokingly turned her face away from him.
"I am sorry. It seems my master is in a bad mood, so I will explain in her stead."
The girl in uniform who had come out later began speaking.
Compared to the girl in the dress, she had a mild and cooperative atmosphere to her.
She bowed her head politely and calmly towards Koutarou and left a strong impression on him.
However, she might be like Kiriha, so instead of relaxing Koutarou decided to hear her out before letting his guard down.
"Please allow me to make our introductions. First off, my master, Her Highness Theiamillis."
And the girl in uniform indicated the girl sitting next to her.
"Her Highness?"
It was a phrase she had used several times already.
Koutarou knew it was a title of honor for someone noble, but he did not think it was suitable for the girl in front of him.
"Yes, Her Highness's name is Theiamillis Gre Forthorthe. She is the princess of the Holy Forthorthe Galactic Empire."
"Princess!? This person over here's the top brat!?"
Hearing Koutarou's words, the girl in the dress, Theia, glared at him.
However, this time, perhaps showing some discretion, she said nothing.
"Yes. She is the seventh princess, but in the present she is the current emperor's only child."
"So she's a princess? Really?"
The girl explaining nodded at the amazed Sanae.
"It will be hard to show you proof of her identity right away, but there is no mistake."
"There will be no need for that. I understand that you at the very least hold a high position."
"Eh!? You'll believe us!?"

“Yes, to a certain extent.”
Unexpectedly, the one supporting the girl’s words was Kiriha.
“What do you mean, Kiriha-san?”
“Koutarou, think back to the power of their weapons.”
“What about the weapons? Well, they were dangerous but…”
“Do you think anyone would be able to walk around with that kind of weaponry? Least of all, antimatter?”
“Oh, you mean like that.”
With that, Koutarou understood what Kiriha meant.
“Sanae, what seems more natural to you? A normal person with that kind of weapon, or someone in a high position?”
“Well, that would be a really important person, right? They have mushroom bombs after all.”
“Right? In other words, that’s how it is. It would be strange for those two to be normal people.”
“I see. Now that you mention it, that makes sense.”
Sanae nodded, satisfied and began making fun of Yurika.
“Yurika, unlike a self-proclaimed princess like yourself, she’s a real one.”
“I’m also a real one!”
“I know. A real hardcore cosplayer, right?”
“You’re wrong! Why does everyone bully me!?”
Yurika ground her teeth in frustration, but no one was listening to her.
“To show position, show power. An old-fashioned method, but it was effective.”
“As for the sudden use of power I would like to apologize.”
The girl bowed apologetically.
“You don’t have to worry about that; we were both in the wrong.”
“Thank you.”
“Koutarou, you sure forgave them quickly, didn’t you?”
“Why don’t you remember what you said.”
Sanae flinched at Koutarou’s cold glance.
She also felt she had said too much.
Apart from touching her breasts at the start, Koutarou had also said a bit too much afterwards.
The same was true for the other two.
“And what about you? Do you also hold a high position?”
“No, I’m just part of the military. I am the protection officer in charge of guarding Her Highness Theia and taking care of her surroundings. My name is Ruthkania Nye Pardomshiha.”
“…Ruth is my childhood friend.”
Theia, who had kept quiet, opened her mouth for a moment.
“She’s a reliable and talented protection officer.”
“Your words are wasted on me, Your Highness.”
Ruth gave Theia a smile, and Theia blushed slightly before starting to sulk again.
“Hmm… so this person’s a soldier.”

“Ruth-san… Oh right, I forgot. I’m Koutarou, Satomi Koutarou, this room’s resident.”
“I’m Higashihongan Sanae. And this flashy person is Yurika. But the only thing flashy about her is her appearance, so don’t pay her any attention”
“I’m Nijino Yurika, a magical –”
Yurika attempted to introduce herself, but…
“Kurano Kiriha. Please call me Kiriha.”
Sadly, she was interrupted by Kiriha.
“Do you really hate magical… No, me that much?”
Yurika asked, crying. Her shoulders slumped and she wept on her handkerchief.
Ruth was surprised by Yurika’s sudden tears.
“Did something happen to Yurika-sama?”
“It’s fine. Please let her be, Ruth-san.”
“Okay, Satomi-sama.”
Yurika continued to cry.
“…….?”
Ruth was unable to comprehend the situation, but she decided to leave it be for now.
“By the way, Ruth. You mentioned a galactic empire before. What did you mean by that?”
“Did she say something like that, Koutarou?”
Sanae, who hadn’t been paying attention, pulled on Koutarou’s sleeve and asked.
“She did. Something along the lines of The Holy something Galactic Empire. That Theia seems to be that country’s princess.”
“I know about the Empire in Ginza[1]!”
There was a famous hotel in Ginza called the Imperial Hotel.
“Those two are unrelated…”
“I know that too!”
“It is just as everybody is saying.”
Ruth nodded her head.
“We came from the Holy Forthorthe Galactic Empire.”
“Holy Forthorthe Galactic Empire… I’ve never heard of a country with that name.”
“Have you heard of it, Yurika?”
“Why would you think I know anything?”
Yurika had a confused look on her face after Sanae asked her.
“It sounds like a name right out of an anime.”
Yurika began sobbing.
“Don’t just make her cry for no reason, Sanae.”
“Sorry, it was just a reflex.”
“So Ruth-san, where is that country? In the Middle East? Or maybe Europe?
“No.”
Ruth shook her head.

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1 Sanae was mixing up Ginza with Ginga, the Japanese word for galaxy.

“It’s about 10 million light years away from here, in a different galaxy.”
“So that really was the case!?”
Kiriha instinctively stood up.

The antimatter weapon Theia and Ruth had used caused Kiriha to hold some suspicion, but she was still very surprised.
“Koutarou, a different Ginza? Is there another Ginza outside of Tokyo?”
“No, another galaxy!”
Koutarou was perplexed. He understood what Ruth was saying, but it was more likely to be the plot of a movie he would watch with Kenji.
“That can’t be right. If they came from a different galaxy that would make them –”
“Yes, that’s correct. We came from a different planet; in other words, we’re aliens.”
Theia and Ruth, these two girls were the most extravagant visitors yet.
“A-alien…”
Koutarou’s jaw dropped.
“After ghosts, cosplayers and underground people, I wasn’t going to be surprised by most things, but to think aliens…”
“I’m not a cosplayer! I’m a magical girl!”
“I believe it’s quite normal to be surprised. It is rare to come into contact with another civilization after all.”
Ruth gave an understanding smile.
“But, now that you mention it, it does kind of feel obvious.”
Lasers, barriers, antimatter cannons. It was hard to imagine that such sci-fi weapons could be found on Earth.
If we had such scientific progress on Earth, we would be a lot further ahead.
Kiriha’s two haniwas were surprising, but this technology was a shock even to Kiriha.
“There’s no doubt about it.”
Kiriha wiped the sweat off her brow. Her cold sweat would not stop.
“…Karama, Korama, prepare that.”
“Got it-ho!”
“We’ll bring it right away-ho!”
As the haniwas heard her orders, they sprung into action right away.
They flipped up the tatami mat closest to the front door and jumped into the hole beneath it.
“What will you do, Koutarou?”
“For starters, I’ll continue as if what they’re saying is true.”
“You believe them when they say they’re aliens?”
“Yes, they don’t seem to be lying.”
Koutarou brought his mouth close to Sanae’s ear and whispered.
“…Besides, even if it’s a lie, those weapons are real.”
“…You have a point. They’re definitely different from someone like Yurika.”

Sanae whispered back and looked at Theia and Ruth. And another reason crossed her mind.
“Hey, Koutarou.”
“Hm?”
“Are you believing them because that Ruth girl is your type?”
“Of course not!”
“Really?”
“Of course! …Well, she is cute, now that you mention it.”
“…I am honored… For you to call me c-cute…”
The girl who had consistently maintained a serious face blushed after hearing Koutarou call her cute. It was only when she made this kind of face that she looked like a girl of age.
“She’s got a proper attitude and she’s not saying anything strange. There’s no reason to doubt her, right?”
“You sound suspicious~ Are you sure it’s not because obedient girls are your type? Typical boys~ Just because she’s pretty and obedient she’s being put on a pedestal~”
“Well, compared to you, anyone would be obedient!”
“…That’s true.”
Sanae, Yurika, Kiriha, and Theia. The four of them were far away from the word ‘obedient’.
“I am truly grateful you believe us, Satomi-sama. I have actually been worried about how to make you believe this part for a while.”
“For a while? So you two didn’t just arrive today, Ruth-san?”
“That’s right.”
Ruth nods.
“Actually, we arrived at this planet yesterday evening.”
“So, what have you been doing all this time?”
“We were gathering data for a translation device from the conversations in Satomi-sama’s room.”
While Ruth was explaining, she pulled out a small box and presented it to everyone.
That was the translation device the two were using.
“Now that you mention it, the two of you are speaking in Japanese.”
“To think this small box can…”
Koutarou and Sanae stared at the box. In order to make it easier for them to look at it, Ruth handed it over to them.
“Because of that, we just about understand everybody’s circumstances. As a result, we ended up eavesdropping on you, and for that I would like to deeply apologize.”
“If we can’t understand one another, we won’t get anywhere, so you don’t have to worry about it, Ruth-san.”
“Thank you very much, Satomi-sama.”
Ruth had been prepared to be resented, so she felt relieved.
“So why did you two come here?”
“That would be our problem…”
Ruth sharpened up; there was no time to be relieved. It was time to get down to business.

“Her Highness Theia came here because of a certain ritual passed down through the emperor’s family.”
“Ritual?”
Kiriha raised her head. Ruth nodded and continued her explanation.
“Yes. A trial is passed down onto the empire’s successor when he or she turns 16.”
“A trial? What kind of trial?”
“They could be all kinds of trials depending on the person. It could be searching for items, exploring an unexplored region, fighting with your destined enemy, and the like. Once they have cleared their trial, they are deemed fit to succeed the throne.”
“So it’s like a ritual to become an adult?”
“That is correct, Kiriha-sama. If a member of the royal family doesn’t display their capabilities, they won’t be allowed to succeed the throne, even if they’re the emperor’s own child.”
“So does that mean when she clears her trial, she will become empress?”
“No, that is not the case. Those who clear the trial are recorded in order of time of completion on the list of candidates with the right to succeed the throne. The one on top of the list is crowned emperor.”
“In order of when they cleared it… That’s how you show your capabilities, huh.”
“Yes, that is correct, Satomi-sama.”
Ruth nodded.
“Which means you two, or rather, the princess over there came here to clear that trial?”
“That’s right.”
Theia opened her mouth.
“I have to show my capabilities. For that reason, I came here with Ruth.”
“Just the two of you?”
Koutarou was slightly surprised. In his head, royalty usually only traveled with a large entourage. However, according to her, Ruth was her only companion.
“Yes. I’m showing my capabilities with this trial. That won’t be possible with a large group.”
“I see. Unless you do it on your own, there won’t be a point.”
“Precisely.”
“So what’s the trial? You came from far away, so are you exploring?”
“No. The trial given to her highness is invasion.”
“Invasion!?”
“Her Highness Theia must invade this room and rule it in both name and reality.”
“W-wait just a minute! Why does it have to be my room!?”
Koutarou was taken aback, and Ruth continued explaining.
“As I believe you are now well aware of, this trial is to show the capabilities of the successor to the throne. Therefore, a real invasion won’t be expected. Her Highness has been given coordinates selected at random to a small space to occupy and make into her own territory. It’s merely a ceremony.”
“So that space just happens to be my room!?”
“I know it’s hard to believe, but the coordinates the computer selected overlap perfectly with this room.”

“What kind of coincidence is that!?”
“We are perplexed by this as well. Normally, the coordinates for this trial are in empty space. All one usually has to do is place their flag in that space and it’s over. This trial requires extreme courage; one must face the uncertainty of traveling to an unknown location in the vastness of space.”
Ruth had a serious look on her face.
The coordinates the computer would give you had an almost 100% chance of being empty space. The universe is mostly empty, after all.
Which is why this was the first time coordinates pointing to a habitable planet, with intelligent life on it, had ever been selected.
“So what happens in this case?”
“If intelligent life is found at the invasion point, you don’t only have to invade but also make the life found there swear its allegiance. It’s a trial to show you are capable of standing above others after all. And of course, taking their life is absolutely out of the question.”
“…Which means…”
Having had this thoroughly explained, even Koutarou was able to understand what would happen next.
“With this, even someone at your intelligence level could understand! Swear your loyalty to me right away and relinquish rule of this room to me! If you do so, you shall become a citizen of our glorious empire and be able to enjoy a long and prosperous life.”
The 7th princess of the Holy Forthorthe Galactic Empire, Theiamillis Gre Forthorthe.
She was not just trying to invade this room, but also Koutarou’s heart.
“I refuuuuse!”
Koutarou’s response to Theia, who was demanding his room and his loyalty, was the same as before.
“Who would ever swear loyalty to you!? Don’t make me laugh!”
After having his room nearly torn apart, Koutarou did not have a good impression of Theia.
Koutarou could not even imagine swearing loyalty to her.
“Damn you, Neanderthal! I treat you gently and this is how you repay me!?”
“When did you ever treat me gently!? The only one who ever lowered her head was Ruth!”
Ouch…
Pain shot through Koutarou’s head after yelling at Theia.
Maybe I got a bit too excited.
Koutarou shook his head in an attempt to get rid of the headache, but the pain remained along with a heavy sensation in the center of his head.
Koutarou thought it was because he had gotten too excited, but in reality it was because he had been pushing his body so hard for the past few days.
“I won’t mind turning you into ashes on the spot!”
“I already know you won’t be able to clear your trial like that! Your empty threats mean nothing!”
However, Koutarou quickly forgot about his headache. Theia, who was in front of him, was a much bigger pain.
“Grrrr, the Neanderthal has picked up some unnecessary knowledge…”

“If you weren’t with Ruth, I would have kicked you out long ago!”
“What!? Watch your words when speaking to your master!”
“Who is this master!?”
“I am, plebeian! Do I have to keep reminding you!?”
“As if I want to remember, Tulip!”
Neither Koutarou nor Theia was backing down, and they glared at each other intensely.
Their faces drew closer and closer, to the point that if they moved a bit further they would be close enough to kiss.
“Your Highness, Satomi-sama, please calm down. Fighting won’t benefit anyone.”
“Even if it’s Ruth-san’s request, I definitely won’t listen to this shrimp!”
“You heard him, Ruth! This plebeian won’t understand unless we use force! This Neanderthal won’t understand the joy of being a Forthorthe citizen!”
Ruth’s persuasion didn’t work on Koutarou and Theia, who were both far too worked up. However, Ruth wouldn’t give up.
“Please! Please, please listen to my selfishness! No matter the outcome the two of you should never fight!”
Ruth was truly worried about the pair of them and it lent power to her words.
“...I understand Ruth. I am sorry.”
“This time only. Only because of Ruth-san.”
Thankfully, her second attempt reached the two.
They eyed each other discontentedly as they stepped down.
“Thank you, both of you. Thank you so much for listening to me.”
Ruth wiped the corner of her eye, quietly relieved.

There's No Spirit of Co-operation!

There's no Spirit of Cooperation!
April 9th (Th)
Corona Convention
Revised
2009/05/01
(Excerpt)
Seventh Article
All fighting during the period when Kasagi Shizuka (Landlord of Corona House, residing in room 206) is taking a break to eat sweets is to be stopped immediately.

“Phew…”
Koutarou was able to calm down after drinking a lot of the tea Kiriha had poured for him.
“Troubles just keep piling up, and I’m starting to lose my mind…”
“It’s at times like those that you have another cup of tea. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any good tea leaves…”
Sanae was hanging on to Koutarou’s back and playing with the empty cup using her Poltergeist.
Now that I think about it, I used to fight all the time with Sanae when we first met.
Koutarou looked at Theia, who was sitting right in front of him, as he was thinking that.
The stubborn Theia, however, shifted her look away from him, determined not to lock eyes with him.
Koutarou felt his current situation was quite similar to when he had first met Sanae.
“Hey, Tulip.”
“…Don’t call me by that strange name! I have a splendid name - Theia!”
Theia glared at Koutarou.
Although she was more aggressive and selfish than Sanae, her puffed-up face was still overflowing with youth.
I have no intentions of handing over this room, but I guess I’m being a bit immature. She’s only a child.
“Alright, Theia.”
“Call me Theia-sama or Your Highness Theia!”
“I’m not a citizen of your country, and I don’t intend to become one either. Think about it; right now we’re enemies.”
“…Very well. What do you want?”
“Although we’re enemies, let’s stop doing things that won’t benefit either of us.”
“What do you mean, more specifically?”
“Punching, kicking, shooting beams, and the like. If I die, you’ll lose out too. The emperor won’t recognize you if you use violence to show your capabilities, right?”
“…”
Theia fell silent. She was aware that Koutarou was correct, but she couldn’t bring herself to agree.
“I’ll restrain myself and keep from attacking you. I think we should both show each other at least that level of restraint.”
“…”
“Your Highness, bargaining is required from time to time.”
“…I understand. It’s true that fighting with you won’t benefit me.”
Ruth was able to persuade Theia.
“If you will accept to negotiate, I will stop resorting to violence.”
Theia acted like she was agreeing reluctantly, but in reality she was on the same page as Koutarou.
“I’m fine with that.”
Hmm… As long as she doesn’t get emotional, it seems like she can be quite reasonable.
Theia could use her weapons to take the entire planet as hostage and threaten Koutarou.

But she did not do that. When she was not losing it, she seemed to be aware that such a thing was preposterous.
“Well, with that settled, I’d like us to organize ourselves and explain our situation once more.”
With Koutarou and Theia calming down, Kiriha drew a breath of relief.
“No objections.”
“Understood.”
Sanae and Yurika agreed right away.
“Let’s do that. I’m starting to lose track of what’s going on.”
In just four days, the population of the room had gone from just Koutarou to six people.
“I don’t mind. I’d like to hear all of your plans once more.”
Theia also obediently agreed.
However, the last one, Ruth didn’t say anything.
She was just Theia’s accomplice.
“Then we’ll start with Koutarou. He is the current legal owner of this room.”
“I’ve lived here since before Koutarou, though…”
“Koutarou has signed a contract with the landlord. We won’t leave you out of this, Sanae, but let’s first hear what Koutarou has to say.”
“…I guess there’s no choice…”
Sanae was dissatisfied, but she held it in for the time being.
Sanae’s feelings for Koutarou had changed, although she was not aware of it herself.
Sanae from when she had just met Koutarou would have never backed down.
“Go ahead, Koutarou.”
“Alright… In my case, it’s simple. While I’m going to high school I’ll be living here. That why I refuse to leave. The 5,000 yen a month rent also helps.
“Pleb, how long does one attend high school?”
“…Three years.”
Although slightly irritated by being called a pleb, Koutarou answered obediently.
“I can’t wait for that long!”

“But I won’t leave. I’m friends with landlord-san, and handing this room over to you would just cause her a lot of trouble.”
Koutarou had two reasons for not leaving.
The first was of course regarding living expenses.
The second was the existence of Shizuka.
Although they had only been together for a few days, Koutarou felt a debt and a bond with her.
That’s why he couldn’t just haphazardly leave this room and push this pain onto her.
Koutarou was well aware of how much Shizuka treasured this building.
Which is why he couldn’t just leave.
“That’s just about it for me.”
“…If this is only about a place to live, you could easily pull back, no?”

“However, it will be troubling if you don’t leave!...”
“Yurika, I’d like you to leave that story for your turn. Next is Sanae.”
“Me?”
“We’re doing it in the order of appearing in this room.”
“I got it. But my reasons are simple, too. I’ve lived here for a long time, so I don’t want to get chased out, that’s all.”
Sanae declared that and laughed indifferently.
“I’m currently in a truce with Koutarou, but I plan on throwing out anyone in my way.”
“B-by possessing... By possessing and killing?”
“If needed... Fufufu. I might put a curse on you♪”
“Hiii!”
Sanae laughed grimly, leaving Yurika frozen with fear.
She slowly approached her.
“N-Noooooooo!”
“Wait, stop, don’t run away Yurika!”
Yurika tried to run into the wardrobe as always, but Koutarou grabbed a hold of her foot.
“L-Let go, please! The only one who needs to be possessed is Satomi-san!”
“Stop kicking! Don’t run away! At least tell us your story first!”
“But, the ghost! The ghost is coming!”
“I might eat you up♪”
“Kyaaaa!! Noooooooooo!!”
“Sanae! Would you give it a break! If you keep this up we won’t be able to continue!”
“Tehehe, sorry~”
Sanae stuck her tongue out and returned to her seat.
“Noooooooo!”
“Yurika, calm down! Sanae’s not coming after you anymore!”
“Let goooo!”
However, Yurika was unable to take in her surroundings and continued to struggle.
Koutarou was kicked several times, and rage began to boil inside of him.
“Gah! This is why I hate cosplayers with nothing but spring in their minds!”
“If we don’t put a stop to this kind of behavior, cosplayers’ social standing will just keep falling. Even though they’re all good people.”
“It’s not cosplay!”
Shouting back in reflex, Yurika was finally able to recall her current situation.
And her face drained of color as she noticed everyone’s cold glare.
“Ehh...”
“...About time...”
Koutarou sighed as he let go of Yurika’s leg and returned to his seat.
“Good work, Koutarou.”
“I don’t want to hear that from you, Sanae!”

“Well, well just relax.”
“Really now…”
“Tehehe~”
Sanae showed no signs of flinching after angering Koutarou.
“I’m sorry for making such a commotion…”
Yurika made an apologetic expression as she returned to her seat.
“Well then, Yurika, it’s your turn now. What reason did you come here for?”
“Yurika came here to hold a cosplay party with her friends, right?”
“Yeah, that’s what it was. The cheap rent caught her eye.”
“You’re wrong! People will come to claim the magic power overflowing in this room. And before that happens, I’d like everyone to get out!”
“Is that the backstory for the party?”
“I will applaud you for being thorough, but I won’t let you have this room for something like that.”
“To be honest, even I am struggling with how to handle Yurika…”
“You’re wrong! Why don’t you ever listen to what I have to say!?”
Yurika desperately tried to appeal to them, but they would not believe her at all.
“Even if you ask us why… right?”
“Yeah, no one would believe in magic nowadays. It’s just not possible.”
“And after calling yourself a hero of love and justice, you constantly run away, leaving Koutarou behind. You’re just not fit to be a magical girl.”
Common sense, reality and cowardice. There was too much going against Yurika for anyone to believe she was a magical girl.
“Auuu, I’m not lying…”
“Don’t worry, Yurika.”
Theia tapped Yurika on the shoulder.
“I believe in your story.”
“Really!?”
And the gloomy expression on Yurika brightened up almost immediately.
“You believe in magic!?”
“Of course!”
“And that I’m a magical girl!? And that enemies are coming!?”
“Yes, of course.”
“Thank youuu! I always hoped that someone who believed me would appear!!”
Yurika grabbed Theia’s hand and shook it intensely as she was crying tears of joy.
“There’s no need for thanks. If you’ll leave in return, that is.”
However Theia’s next words made Yurika’s expression freeze in place.
“Eh?”
“W-what do you mean by that?”
“It’s nothing, I believe you. That’s why you can leave without any regrets. I will judge your enemies. There is no need to worry.”

“W-wait just a minute! You mean –”
“You’ll try to remove her using politics. Even though you don’t believe her for a second, you’ll support her story in order to bargain with her… You’re a clever one, alien princess!”
Kiriha picked up where Yurika left off.
“Kukuku, using force is not the only power royalty has.”
“This is too cruel! You all keep on picking on me! Why!? Even though you’re fine with ghosts, underground people and aliens!!”
Yurika started crying.
“This is discrimination! It’s unfair! I demand a correction in the balance!!”
Yurika jumped into the wardrobe and slammed the sliding door shut with all of her might, and her sobbing voice began leaking through the wardrobe.
“Right, I’m next.”
“Kiriha, why did you come here?”
Everyone quickly lost interest in the sobbing wardrobe.
“**sniff**, I’m here, right here, **sniff**”
And Yurika’s crying got louder.
“My purpose for coming here is to rebuild the altar where my ancestors are enshrined.”
“I see, so this is sacred ground to you?”
“But you’ll also use the altar as a tool to invade the surface, right?”
“That’s correct. Once the altar is rebuilt, we’ll be able to efficiently gather spiritual energy. And then we’ll be able to mass produce spiritual weapons to regain our lost glory.”
“In terms of politics, your goal resembles mine.”
A happy smile appeared on Theia’s face.
So this one is my true enemy. She’s also a quick thinker… This’ll be interesting.
Theia was secretly happy a powerful rival had appeared.
“And finally, Theia-dono, your turn.”
“Yes, my purpose is as I told you before. I came here to prove myself worthy as an emperor of Forthorthe as part of a ritual. I’m after the rule of this room and the pleb’s allegiance.”
Whilst saying that Theia pointed towards Koutarou.
Koutarou had a lot of things he wanted to say, but he held them in.
“Which means that all of us are after this room.”
“That’s right.”
Koutarou and Sanae wanted to live there.
Yurika wanted to hold a cosplay party.
Kiriha wanted to build an altar.
And Theia wanted to rule it.
“In other words, you all came here to invade my room?”
“Simply put, yes, that would be the case.”
Having kept quiet all this time, Ruth chimed in.
Five girls after Koutarou’s room.

They each had their own respective goals, and aimed to deprive Koutarou of his room.
“But what do we do? Nobody wants to fight or leave. Are we going to play more games?”
And they had all agreed to not fight with Koutarou.
Because of that, everyone except Theia had decided to settle it using games.
“Fufufu, games aren’t a bad suggestion. The wars of old could be called such.”
“So, Theia-dono, does that mean you agree to using games?”
“On a condition.”
Theia nodded greatly and showed her composure.
“Condition? What condition?”
“Fufufu, I will only play with that one.”
Theia pointed at Kiriha.
“What do you mean, Theia-dono?”
Kiriha’s expression stiffened.
“It’s simple. If I play a game now, I’ll have a one in five chance of winning. However, after I have exterminated you, it’ll be a one in two chance of winning. Besides, the pleb aside I have no need to play with the rest of you!”
“So that’s your plan!...”
“You think you can win!?”
Tension in the room rose as Theia stood up with a fearless smile.
“Of course I will! I was just about to win a while ago!”
“We’ll see about that. I have already prepared a weapon that will work on you. Karama, Korama!”
“Ho!”
“Yes-ho!”
Responding to Kiriha’s voice, the two haniwas floated in front of her.
Their designs had changed slightly from before.
One had a sword hung on its waist, and the other had added something resembling a beard around its mouth.
“The Spiritual Energy Katana and Spiritual Wave Cannon are prepared-ho!”
“Ane-san, leave this to us-ho!”
“This means neither of us can block the other’s attack.”
Kiriha declared that and stood up with a smile similar to Theia’s.
“To put it simply, the Spiritual Energy Katana and Spiritual Wave Cannon are similar to Sanae’s powers. Like Sanae, these weapons will be able to slip past your barrier.”
“You impudent...!”
“Which means this is mine and Kiriha’s victory. You can’t harm me since I’m a ghost!”
Sanae also stood up with a smile and began forming a will-o’-wisp.
With repeating electrical discharges, the will-o’-wisp gradually grew larger.
“Blue Knight, activate the anti-personnel weapons system. The weapons I want are Mind Pulse and Motor Cannon!”
Following Theia’s orders, the two black disks reappeared above her shoulders.

“Those things won’t work on me!”
“We’ll see!”
However, Theia’s confidence didn’t waver.
“Even if you’re a ghost, you have a mind. So if I can harm your mind, I can defeat you!”
“Dammit, is there anything aliens can’t do!?”
Sanae stomped her feet in frustration.
Koutarou and Ruth who couldn’t keep quiet raised their voices.
“W-Wait a moment you guys! Are you planning on fighting here!?”
“Please stop, Your Highness!”
“Stand down, Koutarou! It seems we need to eliminate this alien princess no matter what!”
“If you get in the way you’ll get hurt!”
“Just stand by and watch, pleb! I’ll show you how powerful your master is!”
“S-Stop! If you guys fight for real, who knows what’ll happen!”
“Your Highness! Please stop, Your Highness!”
However, they refused to listen to Koutarou and Ruth’s desperate pleas.
As the three stared each other down the tension grew.
“W-What’s going on!?”
Yurika, who was unaware of the situation, opened the sliding door, which served as a starting gong.
The fight began.
“Victory goes to those who attack first!”
“Gooooo!”
“Korama, the Spiritual Wave Cannon!”
What happened afterwards was a disaster.
“Look out, Ruth-san!”
“E-eh!?”
A bullet spat out from the disk above Theia’s shoulder and headed for Ruth, who wasn’t paying attention.
Koutarou instinctively reacted and tackled her into the hall leading to the front door.
“Kyaaa!”
Although there was a slight pain from being thrown onto the floor, the bullet fortunately passed above the two.
“T-Thank you, Satomi-sama.”
“Don’t space out, Ruth-san!”
“I’m sorry. Even though I’m a protection officer, I’m not good with fighting…”
As Koutarou was helping Ruth stand up, Yurika came to hide in the hall as well.
“W-W-What’s going on!? The futon inside the wardrobe was charred!”
“Tulip is planning on reducing the number of people in this room before she settles things with me!”
“Eh? We’re not playing games again!?”
“Her chances of winning are higher if she’s just playing against me.”
“Is she serious!? That means I’ll be targeted too!”

“Don’t worry, I’m sure she’s not counting you anyways.”
“Fueeeeee, I don’t want that either~!”
A few minutes had passed since the three began fighting.
“Fuhahaha! What’s the matter, you two!? Do you think you can beat me like that!?”
“What do we do, Kiriha!? She’s just ridiculous!”
“We’re not losing yet! Calm down and look for an opening!”
Although it was Sanae and Kiriha against just Theia, Theia had overwhelming firepower, so the battle was currently progressing evenly.
“But what do we do? At this rate the room will be destroyed!”
Koutarou, who was looking on, started panicking.
Without a victor, the room had taken the majority of the damage during the prolonged fight.
There was charring and bullet holes from stray bullets all over the room, and it was a complete mystery how nothing had caught on fire yet.
“Look out, Satomi-sama!”
“Eh!?”
As Koutarou peeked out to take a look on the situation, a fireball one of the haniwas had spat out headed towards him.
“Waaa! I’ll die!”
“Quick Cast – Fireball! Targeting Option – Auto Homing!”
As Koutarou was covering his head to protect himself from the fireball heading towards him, Yurika’s loud shout could be heard.
“What!?”
The broom in Yurika’s hand began glowing red, and a second fireball appeared from the center of the glow.
“Wah!”
The two fireballs collided midair and exploded.
Although they were able to avoid a direct hit, the flames from the explosion attacked Koutarou.
“I’ll die! I’ll be enveloped by flames and die!”
“Flame Protect!”
However, the flames didn’t harm him.
“Eh? It’s not hot?”
Oddly enough, the flames vanished 10 centimeters away from him.
A yellow light surrounded Koutarou’s body, and when the flames touched it they vanished.
“What’s this…?”
“Satomi-sama!”
“Are you okay, Satomi-san!?”
Ruth and Yurika dragged Koutarou back towards the front door.
“That’s dangerous, Satomi-san! Don’t just poke your face out during a fight! If my magic hadn’t made it in time, who knows what would’ve happened!”
“What was that!? Yurika, was that your doing!?”

Koutarou looked at Yurika with a surprised expression.
“Yes! The fireball and the light protecting Satomi-san right now is my magic!”
Yurika looked at Koutarou’s face and smiles.
“You, are you really…!”
“Yes, I’m really a magical girl!”
Yurika was filled with expectation, unable to wait for Koutarou’s next words, and she finished his sentence for him.
“Are you really an idiot!?”
“…Eh?”
Yurika’s expression froze. The words that had left Koutarou’s mouth were the complete opposite of what she had expected.
“There’re plenty of things that could catch on fire here! What kind of idiot fights fire with fire!?”
“Eeeeeeeeeh!? That’s what your problem is!?”
Yurika was deeply disappointed.
She was overflowing with expectation, but in an instant her expression darkened and her eyes filled with tears.
“**sniff** Why is it always…”
Yurika was hoping that this time Koutarou would admit she was a magical girl and be taken aback in surprise.
This time, this time surely… However, reality was cruel.
“What is it now! You idiot!”
“Auu, please be surprised that I’m actually a magical girl~~!”
“Who cares!? My life is at stake here! Are you trying to burn me to death!?”
“I’m using magic to protect you from fire to prevent that from happening, aren’t I!?”
“Right, I don’t have time to waste on this!”
Koutarou stopped arguing with Yurika and ran towards the front door.
“… Aaaa… I’m starting to hate everything~~!”
As she watched his back, Yurika grew timid and squatted down on the floor.

“My precious stuffed animals also burned up… Maybe I should stop protecting this room and everyone in it~~”
The only reason none of the three girls fighting had been hurt was because of Yurika’s defensive magic.
Otherwise, the three would already have suffered large injuries in the small and narrow room.
On top of that, a large fire would have started by now.
“This is painful~~ I thought being a magic girl would be more brilliant than this~!!”
However, her efforts were not acknowledged, and she was left behind.
And the biggest contributor to a peaceful solution was sulking.
“Ruth-san, I’ll leave Yurika to you!”

Koutarou grabbed his bat from the umbrella stand next to the sulking Yurika and ran into the battle-field in the inner room.
“Satomi-sama, just what are you!?”
“I’m going to stop Theia!”
“Please stop, Satomi-sama! You’ll be risking your life if you jump in there!”
“It’ll be too late if I don’t go now! I don’t even want to think about what would happen if that fight continues on outside of this room!”
Koutarou was well aware of the danger of jumping into the fight, but if he didn’t stop it now it would eventually grow out of control, and they would end up outside of the room.
If that happened, there would be nothing he could do.
Right now, the three were holding back so they wouldn’t hurt themselves with their own attacks, but once they got outside they wouldn’t have to.
They’ll be able to go all out.
“If we’re going to stop them, now is our chance! There’s not much time left!”
Koutarou wasn’t confident he’d be able to stop them if they got outside.
“Satomi-sama…”
“There’s no need to worry; she won’t be able to attack me, right?”
“That’s true, but…”
Ruth anxiously looked towards the inner room in the back. From there she heard three voices and bright flashes blinking one after another.
“As long as I can restrain her, the other two will stop fighting. Ruth-san, this should be the best way to protect your princess.”
“Satomi-sama… You…”
Ruth looked at Koutarou with a surprised look on her face and eventually nodded.
“I understand. I’ll support you.”
“Are you sure?”
“Yes, this is the best for Her Highness.”
Ruth smiled in a mysterious way that showed her commitment.
“I’ll rush straight on and grab her!”

“In that case, I’ll intrude into Blue Knight’s main system and lower Her Highness’s barrier. Please strike when it’s down.”
“I’m counting on you. Let’s go right away; we don’t have any time!”
They quickly decided, and Koutarou rushed towards the inner room.
“Yes!”
Ruth followed after him.
“I’m going, Ruth-san!”
“I’m leaving it to you, Satomi-sama!”
Koutarou jumped into the inner room.
When Koutarou entered the room the three were in the middle of a fire fight.

However, since Theia had more firepower, the other two were being pushed back.
“It’s no use! I can see through all of your attacks!”
“Then what about me!?”
Koutarou rushed towards the girl while laughing loudly.
“What!?”
“Koutarou!? Why!?”
“Get back, Koutarou! You’ll get killed!”
“All you! Stop this stupid fighting right now!”
Koutarou grabbed Theia’s right wrist whilst he shouted out.
“I caught you!”
“What!? The barrier’s not working!?”
The barrier intended to protect the girl failed to activate and allowed Koutarou’s approach.
That was what Koutarou and Ruth had agreed on, but Theia, who was unaware of the situation, was left surprised.
“I won’t just let you do as you please!”
Koutarou pulled on Theia’s arm and glared at her.
“You fool! I told you I won’t attack you!”
“If I just let you fight like this, it will turn into a giant mess!”
“What about it!? Blue Knight, use non-lethal weapons! I can’t just accidentally kill the pleb!”
“AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS.”
As she said so, the weapons above her shoulders changed.
Theia couldn’t afford to kill Koutarou, so she changed out to weapons that were non-lethal even in the case of a direct hit.
“Not gooood!”
However, that showed that Theia still intended to fight.
Koutarou noticed that and threw away his bat, and using both of his hands he held her tightly.
“L-Let go of me, you fool! Don’t just casually touch me!”
“Why should I!? If I let go you’ll just keep attacking, right!?”
“Of course!”
Theia struggled to break free, but Koutarou didn’t make it easy for her.
“Alright, Koutarou! Just keep a hold on her!”
“Sanae!?”
Koutarou turned his head around to see Sanae lifting a TV into the air.
“Stop it, Sanae!”
Sanae intended to throw the TV on Theia, and Koutarou desperately tried to stop her.
The TV had been in use in the Satomi family since before he moved, so it was quite large.
It wouldn’t just hit Theia, but Koutarou as well.
“Eiiiii! Hissatsu Sanae-chan Drop!”
However, Sanae ignored Koutarou and threw the TV anyway.
“Ahhhh!”

“Uwawawa!?”
Koutarou jumped towards the tatami mat while still holding onto Theia.
The TV flew past the spot Koutarou and Theia had stood moments before and rolled across the floor.
It collided with the wall and stopped.
The TV fell apart due to the impact.
“You idiot! Are you trying to take me out with her!?”
”Sorry, I just went with the flow.”
“You have my thanks, ghost! Thanks to you, the tables have turned!”
Falling onto the tatami mat, Theia was able to escape, and she then pointed her weapons at Koutarou.
The main body of the gun could be seen shining eerily through the black disk.
“Oh no!”
“Karama, Korama, block up that hole!”
“Leave it to me-ho!”
“Got it-ho!”
“Fireeee!”
At the moment they fired, the two haniwas blocked the holes.
The attacks hit the haniwas directly.
However, the weapons had been changed out to non-lethal and could not harm them.
“You again! You annoying lot!”
Theia touched her left fist while boiling with anger.
The metallic glove on her fist had the power to blow away her opponents. However, the two Haniwa dodged her attack and returned to Kiriha.
“Thanks, Kiriha-san!”
Koutarou thanked Kiriha while taking some distance from Theia.
“There’s no need for thanks.”
“Eh?”
Kiriha smiled and grabbed a hold of Koutarou, and her big chest was pushed up against Koutarou’s back.
“With this, I can’t lose!”
“Wh-what are you doing!?”
Koutarou shouted at her before he could take the time to appreciate the feel of her breasts pushing up against him.
“Koutarou, while I have you, that girl won’t be able to attack me, but I can attack her.”
“Ho!”
“Hoho!”
The two haniwa floated in front of Koutarou and Kiriha.
“Kiriha-san, let go! There’s no reason to continue fighting!”
“With this, It’s my victory, alien princess.”
“You put some thought into this, People of the Earth!”
Theia ground her teeth and stopped moving.

In the current situation, Theia was unable to attack Koutarou.
Kiriha was using Koutarou as a shield, so she was unable to use any powerful weapons.
However, with non-lethal weapons she couldn't stop the two haniwas.
"Hey Kiriha, get away from Koutarou!"
"Sanae!?"
However, the situation did not proceed the way Kiriha had wanted.
"You're trying to seduce him with your adult figure again!"
"You're wrong! Stop Sanae! You've misunderstand the –"
"What do you mean I'm wrong!?"
Unfortunately, Kiriha's attempts at persuasion failed, and the furious Sanae jumped in to pull Kiriha and Koutarou apart.
"Chance!"
And of course, Theia did not let this chance slip by.
"Blue Knight, exterminate everyone except the pleb!"
"AS YOU WISH, MY PRINCESS."
"Waaa, stop! You'll destroy the room!"
Koutarou had jumped in to stop the three; however, the situation had just worsened instead.

"...Eh?"
When Yurika returned to her senses, she was alone by the front door.
The riot in the inner room was still raging on.
A burnt smell and loud noise filled the room.
"Oh no, the magic is about to lose effect!"
Yurika hurriedly stood up and raised her broom over her head.
"I need to use a stronger magic or the room won't last! Return to the way you were, Angel Halo!"
The broom was wrapped in pure-white smoke.
And once the smoke had cleared the broom was nowhere to be seen. Instead, she was holding a large cane in her hand.

Like the broom, the cane was covered in decorations. No matter how you looked at it, it was not to be used to help one walk.
"And with this, once more!"
Yurika grabbed the cane with both hands and closed her eyes to concentrate.
"Force Field – Mode: Fiery Effect – End – Effective Time Twice!"
Along with her voice, a yellow light shot out from the cane.
The light gradually grew, slowly extending to the floor and walls of the room.
It was a defensive spell to protect Koutarou and the rest, alongside the room.
Yurika let out a sigh of relief.
"Alright... With this, we'll be okay for a while longer."
Once the light extended through the entire room, Yurika wiped her eyes.

“Should I put up Elemental Shield just in case as well…?”
Yurika peered into the inner room where the fight was continuing and tilted her head slightly.
“Eh!?”
At that time, the front door behind her opened without warning.
“What’s with this commotion, Satomi-kuuun!?”
The person who opened the door was none other than the landlord of Corona House – Kasagi Shizuka.
The chaos had kept going well past midnight, and she had come to find out what had been going in in Room 106.
“T-The room is a complete mess! What’s going on!?”
Anyone could tell the horrible state of the inner room from the front door.
As soon as Shizuka saw it, she was taken aback in surprise.
“What are you doing, Satomi-kun!?”
Shizuka took off her sandals and rushed towards the room.
“No, stop, it’s dangerous to go inside!”
“Outsiders should keep quiet!”
“Kyaa!?”
Shizuka pushed away Yurika, who was trying to stop her, and jumped into the inner room.
“Kyan!”
Being pushed away, Yurika rolled towards the wall, collided and stopped moving.
However, Shizuka didn’t have the time to care about that.
“Just what exactly are you people doing!?”
The room was charred and filled with holes.
Inside of it were Koutarou and the others fighting.
It was very clear to Shizuka that they were responsible for what had happened to the room.
“It’s dangerous, Landlord-san, don’t come over here!”
“T-This is my precious Corona House, my father and mother’s keepsake!”
However, Koutarou’s words of restraint did not reach the enraged Shizuka.
There was probably no one who could have seen Shizuka’s attack.
“Haaaaaaaaa!”
The moment she had entered the room, Shizuka saw Sanae and she punched her with all of her might.
“Kyaaa! Whyyy!?”
That lightning-fast punch sent Sanae flying, even though normal attacks should not have been able to affect ghosts.
Sanae, who had let her guard down, didn’t even have time to defend herself.
“Hya!”
However, Shizuka did not just stop there.
She used the momentum from the punch and used centrifugal force to unleash a sharp kick.
“Gua!”
“Daaaa!”

Her blow hit Kiriha and blew her away.
Koutarou, who happened to be next to Kiriha, got caught up in the attack.
The attack's power wasn't enough to kill them, and instead the two fell down next to the wall together.
"W-Who are you!?"
Shizuka, who had eliminated Sanae and Kiriha in an instant, caused Theia to freeze in her tracks.
"I'm this building's landlord. I won't let any of you keep bothering the neighbors anymore!"
Her cold voice and determined posture showed none of her normal kindness.
That was just how angry she was.
"I won't take anyone's orders! Attack her, Blue Kni-"
"You're too slow!"
Shizuka, sensing Theia's intent to attack, showed no mercy and struck Theia with her palm.
"Gyah!?"
Theia was unable to finish giving her attack orders due to the fast and heavy attack, and she joined Koutarou, Sanae, and Kiriha on the floor.

"L-Landlord-san...?"
Koutarou couldn't believe what he had just witnessed.
Shizuka was able to defeat the invading girls Koutarou had been struggling with in just a few seconds.
And without using any weapons.
"I can't believe it..."
"What is she!? Is she really human!?"
"She punched me!? She's not Koutarou, but she could touch me!"
Of course, it was same for the girls as well; nobody could believe what just happened.
However, it didn't matter if they believed it or not; they had all taken enough damage to render them immobile.
Shizuka stopped moving and exhaled greatly, and she turned towards Koutarou and the rest as if nothing had happened.
Being exposed to Shizuka's piercing glare, the four people froze.
Everyone was certain she was about to finish them off.
"Satomi-kun."
"Y-Yes!"
Shizuka looked at Koutarou.

I had a good life…
The other three felt relief that they weren't the one getting Shizuka's attention.
"W-What may I help you with, Landlord-san?"
Koutarou, on the other hand, got anxious.
Just witnessing Shizuka's overwhelming ability caused him to sweat nonstop.
"If something like this happens again, I'll have you leave."
"Y-Yes, I understand!"
Shizuka's glance was sharp and her voice was cold.
The current Shizuka had an overpowering presence that could never be seen in her normal self.
And being exposed to that, Koutarou could feel the life draining from him.
"And then there's you three!"
"Waa!"
With Shizuka's glance shifting over to the three girls, they all begin trembling whilst embracing each other.
"I'm sorry!"
"I'm sorry!"
"I'm sorry!"
The three girls apologized in choir. Honor and reputation was nowhere to be seen.
"The next time you make such a big mess… You know what will happen, right?"
"Yes!"
"If you hurt this building or trouble the other residents…"
Shizuka stopped midsentence and cracks her knuckles.
"…I'll definitely make sure you regret it. That you're alive, that is."
And Shizuka laughed with a smile.
The three girls let out a scream when they saw that smile.
Shizuka was simply laughing and smiling, but she was filling the room with her overpowering presence and killing intent.
Compared to this, the expression she showed Koutarou was much better.
This is a demon. This is a demon in the form of a human… I am not allowed to act against her…!
That is what the three girls' instincts were screaming at them.
And it was at this point that the three girls finally remembered Yurika, who was passed out next to them.
Why are you the only one unconscious!
The girls were envious of Yurika, who was out cold.
"What's your answer?"
Shizuka's smile grew bigger as the three girls neglected to answer.
Many men would find that smile very attractive, but the three girls only felt fear.
"I understand! I won't do it again!"
"I was planning on solving it p-peacefully from the start. I have no o-objections. None!"
"I am of noble birth. I strongly dislike barbarous methods like fighting. F-feel at ease!"

Their responses were all different.
But they all had the same meaning: a total surrender to Shizuka.
“Well done.”
With this, Corona House’s Room 106 quieted down for the first time in a while.
Amongst the burned and scorched furniture, only the tea table remained.
Shizuka joined in and seven people surrounded the tea table. The small and narrow room was now at its limit; however, no one raised a complaint.
Apart from Shizuka, everyone was sitting straight up with a serious expression.
“...I now understand the situation.”
After hearing the four girls’ circumstances, Shizuka slowly nodded.
“A ghost, a cosplayer, an underground person, and an alien. I find it hard to believe, but there’s not much room for doubt.”
Shizuka spoke in a very professional tone; however it had none of the gentleness she had shown when Koutarou had moved in.
“Excuse me... I’m not a cosplayer, I’m really a...”
Yurika attempted to object.
“...What is it?”
“N-No, It’s nothing. I’m a cosplayer, yes.”
However, when Shizuka glared at her, she shook and easily took back her objection.
“...However, as the landlord I can’t overlook any rioting. All of you will have to solve this peacefully.”
As the landlord, that was the line that Shizuka had drawn.
“We had no intention of fighting against Koutarou. But...”
“We would never be able to come to an agreement! Even if you say to solve it peacefully, that would not be easy!”
“She’s right! Koutarou aside, I’ll never be able to get along with this woman!”
However, the girls who had done nothing but fight were unable to simply just accept Shizuka’s proposal.
“Then would you prefer eternal peace right now? I’m fine either way.”
“That said, fighting nonstop won’t solve anything!”
“Y-You’re right. The time has come for us to work together.”
“I’ll become a pacifist instead!”
However, as Shizuka cracked her knuckles while smiling, the girls’ attitudes changed completely.
The three girls sweated profusely and agreed to Shizuka’s proposal.
“I’m happy we’ve come to an agreement. So what about you, Nijino Yurika-san?”
“...”
Yurika didn’t answer.
“Nijino-san?”
“...”
“Surely, you’re not saying you’d like to keep fighting?”
“Hey, what’s wrong?”

Sensing danger from Shizuka, Koutarou spoke up and looked over at Yurika.
"...Yurika, just say you don't want to fight. There's no need to put your life on the line for cosplaying."
And whilst shaking her shoulders, Koutarou whispered to her.
"..."
However even then, Yurika said nothing.
"Waa~~, Yurika!?"
Instead, being shaken by Koutarou, Yurika fell onto the floor.
"She's unconscious...?"
"The poor thing, she must have been terrified..."

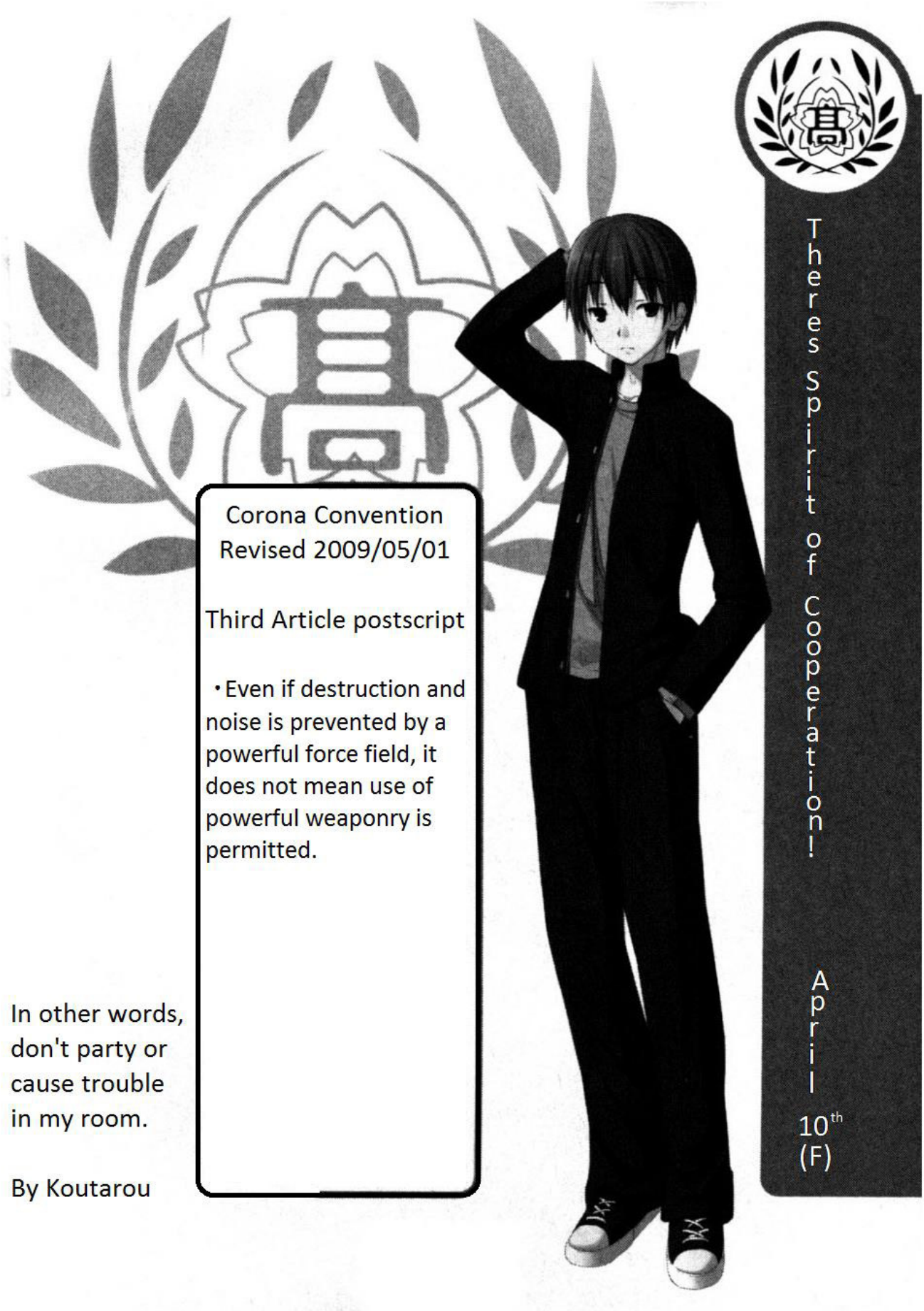
Under Shizuka's lead, Koutarou and the rest agreed on a treaty.
And it was quickly put onto a document.
The content was mainly about peacefully deciding on the owner of the room.
It also included not destroying Corona House, not disturbing the neighbors, dealing with arguments outside the room, and keeping it quiet during the night.
And finally, that treaty was named the Corona Convention.
"I'm done. You're next, Theia."
"This is humiliating... To think that I'm signing this document... There's no humiliation greater than this..."
Theia received the document from Sanae and reluctantly removed the cap from the pen.
"Please endure it, Your Highness."
Ruth smiled wryly next to her.
"You don't have to sign it."
"Really!?"
Theia's expression brightened after hearing Shizuka's unexpected offer.
"If you don't sign, I'll have you experience eternal peace right now though."
"N-No... Thanks, but I'd rather sign this document!"
Theia hurriedly moved the pen.
By the way, she was writing in her native tongue, so the only ones who could read it were Ruth and herself.
"As royalty, I have a duty to bring about peace! For that, I will throw away my pride!"
Although there was some whining, in the end everyone signed the document.
"Landlord-san, do I sign it as well?"
"Of course, Satomi-kun. You are the current tenant of this room. If you don't sign it, how will we be able to proceed?"
"I already have a contract with Landlord-san, though..."
Continuing after Theia, Koutarou signed the document with his name.
"Satomi-san, after you are done give it over to me please."
Yurika waited until the time was right and raised her hand as Koutarou finished writing.
"..."

However, Koutarou just stared at Yurika instead of giving her the pen and document.
“W-What is it?”
“Landlord-san, should Yurika sign it as well?”
“That won’t be needed in Yurika’s case, right?”
Sanae spouted out.
“Well, now that I think about it, Nijino-san might not need to… Yes, she doesn’t need to sign.”
“Then, lastly it’s –”
“I’ll do it! I’ll sign it! Please let me!”
Yurika stole the document and pen from Koutarou as he was handing them over to Kiriha.
She then wrote her name down while tears were forming in her eyes.
Nijino Yurika.
That was her real name.
“There’s no need to cry, Yurika.”
“B-But… I’m serious!”
Kiriha received the document and pen from the half crying Yurika and signed it with her name.
“I’m done.”
After everyone was done signing, the document ended up in Shizuka’s hands.
There were five names written:
Koutarou, Sanae, Yurika, Kiriha, and Theia.
“…Excellent. With this, the decision is formally in effect. If you violate it… You know what will happen, right?”
Shizuka looked over the document and then moved her glance to the room. The other six people began shaking.
The previous fear they had experienced was firmly implanted into them.
“Well then, everyone, I hope you find a method that everyone can agree to and that will solve the problem peacefully.”
Eh?
Shizuka’s smile looked distorted to Koutarou.
But soon, it wasn’t just limited to her, but the surrounding scenery as well.
Eventually he started getting dizzy and lost his balance.
Not good…
And Koutarou began to lose his consciousness.
“Satomi-kun!?”
“Waaa!? Koutarou collapsed!?”
“Hey, this is not the time to be sleeping! Wake up!”
“Don’t move him! He has a terrible fever! Get the futon and ice!”
“I’ll go get the medical treatment kit!”
“I’ll use h-healing magic!”
“You don’t have to do anything unnecessary; get the futon instead!”
“Auuuu!”

And Koutarou's consciousness slowly sank into darkness.
Koutarou opened his eyes when he heard the sound of flowing water.
"W-What...?"
At first, Koutarou was surprised to find himself in his futon, but he quickly remembered what had happened.
That's right, after I signed the document I began feeling faint, and...
The clock on the wall indicated that it was 5 o' clock, which meant Koutarou had been asleep for several hours.
"You're awake, Satomi-sama."
A shadow was looking down on Koutarou.
"...Ruth-san?"
"Good morning, Satomi-sama."
She smiled mildly as she changed the wet towel on Koutarou's head.
The sound of flowing water he had heard a few moments ago was her washing the towel.
"Thank you, Ruth-san."
The new towel cooled him down and made him feel comfortable.
"There is no need to thank me for something like this. Besides, if you're going to say thanks, say it to everyone, please. When you collapsed everyone was very worried."
"Yeah..."
Koutarou nodded to Ruth and looked around, and he could see the girls around him.
They were seated around his futon, and everyone had an exhausted look on their face as they were sleeping.
"Did everyone help nurse me back to health...?"
"Yes. Kasagi-sama was here just a moment ago, but..."
"Even Landlord-san?"
"Yes. She said she had school to attend and left with an apologetic look on her face."
"I see. I'm sorry I caused her so much trouble..."
Koutarou looked around his surroundings again.
Sanae was sleeping soundly next to his pillow.
Kiriha was sleeping next to him.
Yurika was sleeping while holding on to a square cushion.
Theia looked like she was sleeping uncomfortably in her big dress.
Koutarou had considered them troublemakers for a long time, but looking at them now the thought didn't cross his mind.
They might not be all that bad...
He was feeling gratitude due to their kindness.
"Satomi-sama, please close your eyes once again."
Ruth smiled gently.
"Satomi-sama, you're the most tired after all. You've been forcing yourself for these past several days, right?"

“...Yeah, I think I will.”
Koutarou obediently closed his eyes.
“Good night, Satomi-sama.”
As Koutarou closed his eyes he spoke once more.
“...Thank you.”
Those words were not just intended for Ruth.

There's Spirit of Co-operation


There's Spirit of Cooperation!
April 10th (F)
Corona Convention
Revised 2009/05/01
Third Article postscript
・Even if destruction and noise is prevented by a powerful force field, it does not mean use of powerful weaponry is permitted.
In other words, don't party or cause trouble in my room.
By Koutarou

“Oh?”
Harumi stretched and peeked through the small window in the door leading into the classroom for Class 1-A and looked around.
“Satomi-kun is…”
The disorderly atmosphere before homeroom was the same regardless of year.
Students were spending their mornings in various ways, some talking to friends, others doing their homework, and some reading a book.
“…Ah, there he is!”
Harumi found the person she was looking for sitting in the back of the classroom.
“Oh good, Satomi-kun must be feeling better…”
Koutarou had taken the day off school yesterday.
When Harumi had heard of his absence, she had come to look at how Koutarou was feeling today.
“He’s laughing… It looks like he’s feeling better…”
Confirming that, Harumi stopped peeking and turned around to walk to the second years’ classrooms.
Being shy, the thought of calling out to Koutarou didn’t cross her mind.
“Alright… I’ll have to work hard today as well.”
Harumi was satisfied just seeing Koutarou back and healthy.
She had no need to call out to him since she was certain Koutarou would be coming to the clubroom after school.
Koutarou, on the other hand, was not aware Harumi had stopped by, and was cheerfully chatting with Kenji like always.
“But the school sure is relaxing… We can’t be too noisy, we can’t be too…”
Koutarou said that while looking around the classroom.
“However, it’s rare for you to take a day off from school, Kou.”
“…For a no-brains athlete, right?”

After the commotion, Koutarou had been absent from school for a day.
On Sunday, Sanae appeared. On Monday it was Yurika, Tuesday it was Kiriha, and Wednesday it was Theia and Ruth.
The nonstop commotion had left Koutarou exhausted.
Just sleeping until the morning hadn’t been enough to recover.
So Koutarou had been absent on Thursday, and today it was Friday.
“Well, even moving in and attending the entrance ceremony would affect even the mighty Kou.”
“Yeah, something like that.”
Koutarou had not told Kenji the truth because Kenji disliked paranormal phenomena and the occult.
“…Ahahahaha, it’s a good thing you recovered, Satomi-kun! Ahahaha!”
Shizuka, who was standing next to Koutarou and Kenji, let out an awkward laugh.
Being the only one who was aware of Koutarou’s situation, she sympathized with his complex feelings.
Which is why she had a complex smile with sympathy mixed in it, but…
“Hahaha, HAA!?”

However, her smile suddenly froze.
“Alright everyone, return to your seats!”
The female homeroom teacher entered the classroom.
However, that alone wouldn’t be enough to surprise Shizuka.
“Everyone listen~! It’s an odd time for it, but I’d like to introduce you to the transfer students~♪”
The homeroom teacher brought in four transfer students.
Those four transfer students were none other than Yurika, Kiriha, Theia, and Ruth wearing the school’s uniform.
They followed the teacher and lined up in front of the blackboard in the classroom.
“...I tried to stop them, you know.”
Sanae appeared in front of Koutarou with a serious expression on her face.
Oddly enough, she was also wearing the schools uniform, floating in the air as she drifted towards Koutarou.
“What are those girls planning...”
Shizuka should also be able to see Sanae, but she showed no signs of noticing.
Instead, her focus was on the four people who stood in front of the blackboard.
And it wasn’t just Shizuka who didn’t notice Sanae.
Not a single student noticed Sanae; the only ones who could see and hear her were Koutarou and the four girls.
“This is too much... Even if they’re trying to put pressure on you to chase you out of the room...”
“F-For something like that... You’ll do this much, you guys!...”
Koutarou’s fist began trembling.
“Ooh, Koutarou is here!”
Theia unnaturally called out to Koutarou, as if she had just noticed his existence.

“I’m glad we could meet again, Satomi Koutarou.”
“Satomi-saaan! How fortunate... We’re in the same class~~!”
Kiriha and Yurika followed Theia’s lead.
The only one who didn’t say anything was Ruth, who was smiling apologetically.
“...Those idiots... Being so obvious about it...”

Of course they were well aware Koutarou was in this class; in fact, that was the precise reason why they had transferred into his class.
And they also knew what would happen if they called out to him like this.
“Koutarou?”
“Meet again?”
“Satomi-san?”
“Do you know them, Satomi-kun?”
Of course, the class stared at Koutarou.
They were both curious and jealous.

A few of them even held a grudge against him.
That was a given, since the girls were all beautiful.
“That’s right, I had completely forgotten... In the end, you’re invaders... Alright, if that’s how you want to play it I’ll accept your challenge...”
“Satomi-kun, not here! Calm down!!”
Shizuka’s persuasion didn’t enter Koutarou’s ears.
Koutarou emotionally shouted out in a loud voice.
“Bring it on! I’ll take you all ooooooon!”
“What are you talking about, Koutarou?”
Theia tilted her head cutely and feigned ignorance.
Yurika was afraid of Koutarou.
Kiriha calmly observed the development of the situation.
And Sanae was floating in the air and happily laughing at Koutarou.
“I’ll protect my livelihood with my own hands! I won’t let you guys do as you please!”
There were only two years and 11 months left until Koutarou’s graduation.
The curtains for a long three years’ fight rose.

Afterword

Long time no see, everybody. It's Takehaya. It's been about a year since "Ano Hibi wo Mou Ichido", and my second work has finally been published. This is all thanks to everybody's support, so I would like to start off by thanking all of you guys. Since I have some leeway with the pages this time around, I'd like to touch on my works. "Rokujouma no Shinryakusha!?" is a comedy that follows Koutarou, our protagonist who's just entered high school, and his nonstop misfortune. My previous work didn't have any comedic elements in it, so it has quite the different feel to it. Also, this work has been set up so that it can be continued. I wrapped my previous work up in a single volume without thinking. I should be able to continue this one depending on the reception. Speaking of differences, the illustrator this time around is also different. The one helping me this time around is Poco-san. Though I was taken aback by his excitement when I first met him, I think he'll be just right for the job.

This work came to life when I was working on a brutal story of a game two years ago. When writing that story, I felt like I would eventually lose my mind. It was at that point that I figured that writing a bright story would put me in a better state of mind, and following that simple idea, the first draft for this work was created. However, being given the go-ahead with this story turned out to be a problem due to differing views with the publishers. After a lot of discussion, we eventually decided to go back to the original idea and go ahead with the first draft, and because of that there was a big delay before I could start writing. In return, I believe I was able to write something good. I would be happy to hear if everyone else felt the same way. By the way, I was feeling good as I was writing this story. Although this is the second novel I've written, the first one ended on the first volume, so it's more like this work is my first, and while I have enthusiasm, I still have ways to go when it comes to experience and technique. With that in mind, I would like everyone to gently watch over me. If the reception is good enough, I'm hoping to release the second volume soon. If possible, I'd like to release the continuation to the first and second volumes during this year.

If possible.
That's right, if possible.

What a nice phrase.

And finally, I would like to thank the publishers, Poco-san helping me with illustrations, my friends who would give me advice and the readers. After using up a couple of pages, this seems like a good place to stop. Let's meet again in some other afterword.

If possible, of course.

January, 2009.
Takehaya.